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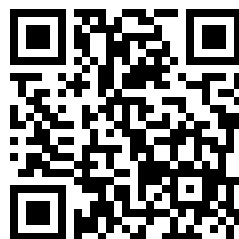
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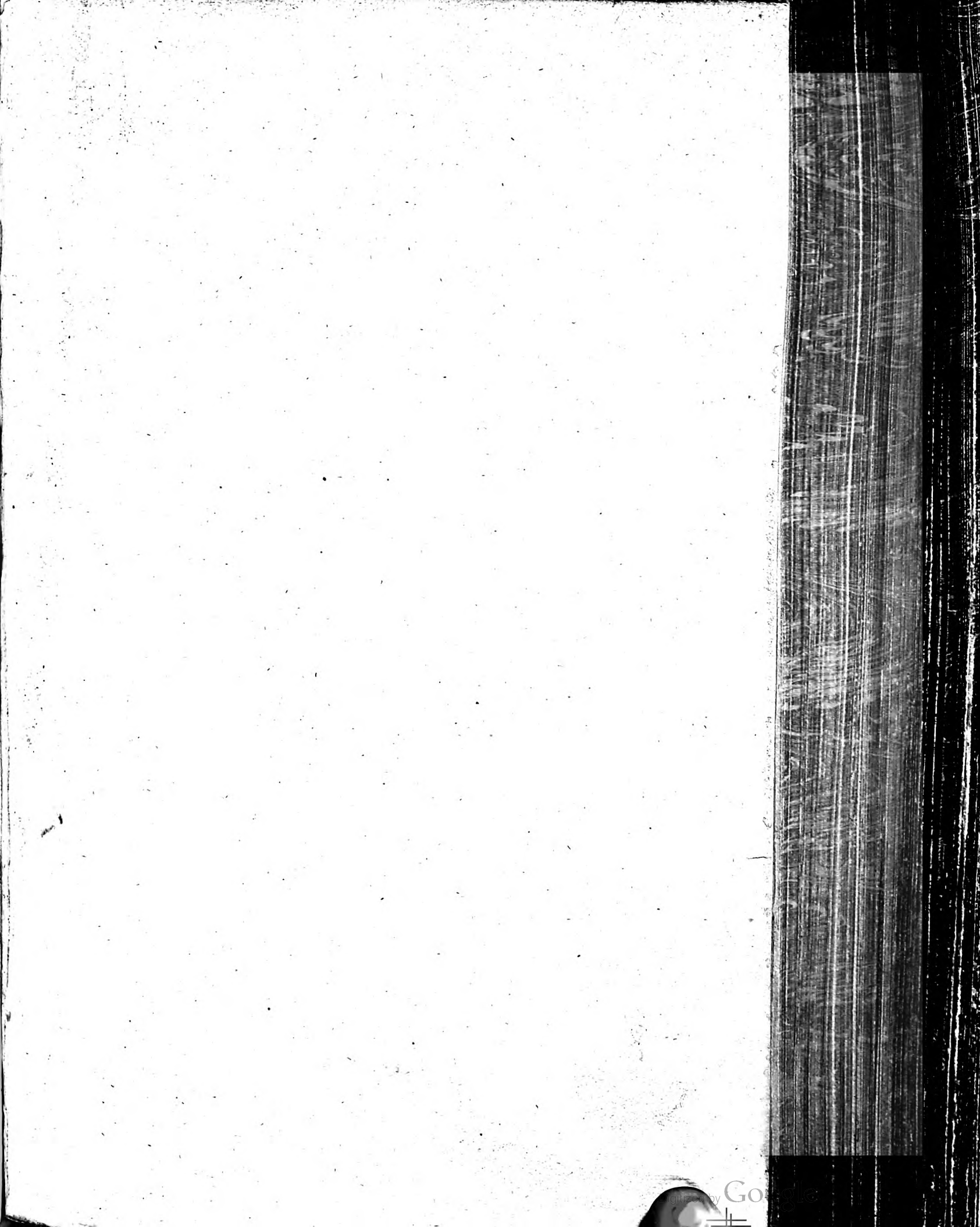
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475. d. 14

In illis doctrinis hunc locum, cui
 Titulus (A Vocabulo) in the midst of
 inquiry, una cum annexis, in
 quo (est) nonnulla mihi haec in certa & ex-
 plorata) nihil tamen reperio Doctrinae Di-
 scipulorum Ecclesiae Anglicanae aut potius
 moribus contrarium: Quapropter dignum
 censeo, qui in doctorum nram

Typis mandatum.

Rob: Hall, R. in Christo Pat. D. H. in Christo Episc.
 Lond. a Sac. Domest.

1744. 11. 10.

PErlegi doctissimum hunc Librum, cui
Titulus (*A Modest Inquiry into the Mystery of
Iniquity,*) unà cum annexa *Synopsi Prophetica*; in
quo (etsi nonnulla mihi haud ità certa & ex-
plorata) nihil tamen reperio Doctrinæ Di-
sciplinæve Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ aut bonis
moribus contrarium: Quapropter dignum
censeo qui in doctorum usum

Typis mandetur.

*Joh. Hall, R. in Christo Pat. D. Humfredo Episc.
Lond. à Sac. Domest.*

Mar. 11. 1663.

A
MODEST ENQUIRY
 INTO THE
Mystery of Iniquity,
THE FIRST PART,

CONTAINING
 A Careful and Impartial Delineation of the
True I D E A of
ANTICHRISTIANISM

IN THE
 Real and Genuine Members thereof, such as
 are indeed opposite to the indispensable Pur-
 poses of the Gospel of Christ, and to the Interest
 of his Kingdome.

By *H. MORE*, D. D.

Sext. Empiric.

Οὐτε ζητεῖν ἔστιν ὅτε δεῖται αὐτοῦ πολλήν φωνήν.

L O N D O N,
 Printed by *J. Fleisher* for *W. Morden* Book-
 seller in *Cambridge*. MDC LXIV.



982



To the READER.

READER,

I.



As it been but onely to apologize for breaking that silence which I might seem to have imposed upon my self by publickly intimating the probability of it, it had upon that account been requisite to Preface something to excuse the unexpected publishing of this new Treatise.

His necessity of Prefacing before this present Treatise.

But I have fallen upon such a Subject, as whose very Title sounds so harshly and disharmoniously to some ears, that this alone were of sufficient force to extort from me the trouble of a Prefatory Apology: The Idea of Antichristianism; Both these words are so heavy laden with preconceived offence and prejudice, that the Book may also be prejudged and precondemned before perused for the very Title's sake, unless I prepare the way, by due and timely information, for better acceptance.

2. Know then, Reader, that this Idea, which I present thee with, is not a vain, airy, Platonical, or Chimerical Figment, as some phansy every Idea to be; nor my treating of Antichristianism, a Rude, uncivil, uncharitable, phraseological Form of railing against such Things or Persons as are not onely Innocent, but Sacred: But contrariwise, the nature of Antichristianism is so justly circumscribed

This Idea of Antichristianism, what the nature thereof is, and how unliable to any uncivil construction.

TO the READER.

by this Idea, and so fitly limited thereby; that it is in truth a bridle to the tongues and lips of such as, not knowing what is truly Antichristian and what not, in every pettish mood call any thing so in Religion that does not suit with their own humour and phancy. Besides, this Treatise being written in the way of an Idea, that is to say, being an Abstract Description or Delineation of the nature of Antichristianism, without any application thereof to any person or persons whatsoever; what Rudeness, Incivility or Uncharitableness can this design carry along with it, unless it can be thought rude or uncivil to define Vices in abstracto, and describe them in their Parts and Objects, and in what-ever Circumstances make to the clear and perfect knowledge of them? provided it be done faithfully and skilfully. And truly, that I have not falsified any thing in this my Description of Antichristianism, I dare with confidence appeal to the judgment of any able and unprejudiced peruser thereof. But what I have set down for Antichristian, is such of its own nature, whether it be called so or no. Which accuracy if all would imitate, nothing would tend more to the peace of Christendom, and the steady and firm promotion of Protestantism in every Nation.

That the abuse of the terme does not take away the right use of it.

3. Well, be it so, will some reply, that there is nothing falsely nor unfaithfully managed in this Province you have undertook, yet is not the undertaking it self, though just and usefull, yet something ignoble, inglorious and ungentile, thus to tincture your style and soil your pen with the names of Antichrist and Antichristianism, of which the breath of the rude and ignorant vulgar usually smells as strong as of Onions and Garlick, and have so fouled these words by their unmannerly mouthing them without all aime, that they have made them now unfit to pass the lips of any civil person? In answer to which, I must ingenuously confess that the Title of my Discourse for this very reason may justly seem less plausible. But it is the true and proper Name of the matter which I handle, to which onely if these ruder people had been taught to appropriate the Term, it could never have contracted any such nauseous prejudice as it seems to have done. And I hope I am at least excusable, if not thank-worthy, in that I have taken pains to teach them the due and proper use thereof.

4. But

TO the READER.

4. But if there be any farther meaning in the Objection, as if it were ignoble or ungentile, and below a man of a generous spirit, to concern himself in the detecting or opposing Antichristianism it self; I must take leave to profess that I think the Objectour understands not what Antichristianism is, or at least not what I understand by it, or have described it by in this Idea. For that Antichristianism which I oppose, and expose here to the view of the world, is nothing else but real Impiety, gross Fraud and Couzenage, and most barbarous and unparallel'd Cruelty against the harmles Members of Christ; and all this (which infinitely aggravates the crimes) under the show and pretence of Piety and Religion, nay of the most Sacred of all Religions, Christianity it self. If these things therefore be not onely uncivil and ungentile, but ferine, brutish, or rather Diabolical, can it be ungentile or uncivil heartily and professedly to oppose them?

That the opposing of Antichristianism in our sense is not at all ungentile; but rather Heroical,

5. Or to plead more distinctly and more particularly to two capacities of men; to them first that have a conscience and belief of Christian Religion as it is delivered in the holy Scripture; I demand of them how ignoble or inglorious a thing they deem it to oppose that which is plainly and palpably opposite to the Word of God and to the Commandments of Christ Jesus; to endeavour to demolish that which does supplant and frustrate the very End of the Gospel of Christ, and is so diametrically repugnant to the Interest of his Kingdom. Certainly whosoever can judge such a Design as this dishonourable, must be of the spirit of that company whom our Saviour of old most righteously reprov'd in these words, How can ye believe, that receive honour one of another, and seek not that honour that cometh of God onely? As it is said also in another place, For they loved the praise of men more then the praise of God.

Made evident to the judgments not onely of Believers;

John 5. 44.

John 12. 43.

6. And now for them that think it so noble and glorious a thing to be indifferent to all Religions, or indeed to believe none, who are not so much as touch'd with the sense of the common Christianity, such as all who call themselves Christians agree in; yet if they have not

But even of Infidels or Atheists themselves.

TO the READER.

put off the sentiments of common Humanity, (then which nothing can be more barbarous and ungentile) I demand of them, what offence can it be against the Laws of the highest Generosity , to profess a mans disgust and enmity against such a constitution of things as runs point-blank not onely against the Law of Christ and the plain Dictates of the Scripture , but against the most indispensable and indeleble Rules of Nature and of Reason , and against the common and uni-versally-acknowledged Rights of Mankind ? Be it that thou thy self scarce believest that there is a God , much less any thing to come after this Life ; and therefore hast a Conscience free to any Religion , be it never so wicked or foolish , and canst laugh at the imperious Impostures of the Priest, when thou hast done. But canst thou be assured that thy Children will be such , that the Wife of thy bosome will continue such, if she be so for the present ? Canst thou promise for thy most intimate Friend , which is as dear to thee as thy self ? nay, canst thou promise for thy self, that God may not so powerfully strike thy Conscience some time or other , as to convert thee to the true knowledge of himself and of his Son Jesus ? Now I tell thee compendiously and at once , That the Contexture of this Antichristianism which I oppose is a mere Train or Net laid or spread for the Life of thy self, thy Friend , thy Wife and Children. None can be in knowledge and judgment the professedly-faithful Servants of God and of his Christ, but they are ipso facto made obnoxious to the bloody salvageness of this Antichristian Monster.

But suppose thine own Conscience not yet awakened , canst thou be so devoid of natural Affection , or (whilst thou talkest so loud of Generosity) degenerate so much below the very brute Creatures , as not to be affected, nay deeply and unsupportably afflicted, at the haling of thy Wife out of thy Bosome, and the pulling of thy Friends and of thy Children out of thy Arms , and committing them to noisome Prisons , and after a sad and tedious durance in these foul Cells to have them brought out in the sight of the People to the most opprobrious and torturous Death that ever is inflicted on any Malefactors ; that is to say , not onely to have thy most intimate Friend, thy dear Parents , or thy Children,

TO the READER.

Children, but thy Wife herself, as if she were a Witch, or a Poisoner of her Husband, to be burnt at the Stake, yea though with child, the birth breaking forth by the merciless Midwifery of the parching Flames: and all this Cruelty exercised upon them because they will not sin against God and their own Conscience? Which holy Sensibilitie of Spirit and awfull Reverence of the Deity, though thou, according to the grossness of thy Philosophy, maiest conceive a weakness in them, yet (it being such a blemish as even in thine own judgment bears no badge of dishonour upon it, nay is exceeding honourable in the prosperous, and as tenderly and feelingly pitied in the afflicted and calamitous) it cannot one jot abate the endearedness of thy affection to thy suffering Friends in this case; the Loveliness of their Personages, the discreet Obligingness of their Carriages, and their constant Faithfulness and Serviceableness in all Duties and Affairs having impressed so deep a character of Love and Esteem in thee as cannot easily be obliterated.

Can therefore the opposing of so barbarous a constitution of things as this, and so grievous and insufferable to thine own sense, and in thine own judgement, be upon any pretence accounted ignoble or inglorious, and not rather highly Generous and Heroical, unless all the Acts of Hercules, and his celebrated victories over those destroying Monsters of his Age, must be reputed but the petty Exploits of some pitifull Pedant or Histrionical Whiffler? Nay, on the contrary, we may safely pronounce, That he that has not an hearty loathing and abhorrency from so ugly and odious a Frame of things as I have described in this Idea, is not onely in a state of Unregeneratedness, and utterly devoid of the Life of God, and consequently incapable of eternal Salvation, but even sunk below the nature of a Man, and become not onely uncivil, but either Stupid and sottish, or else of a temper plainly salvage and inhumane.

7. But though Antichristianism described in your Idea
(will

To the READER.

That this Idea of Antichristianism is not a mere Idea, but a true Transcript out of History
 * Herodot. lib. 1. cap. 172.

(will some farther urge) be thus Impious and Tragical a business, yet in the mean time we are to remember that it is but an Idea ; and therefore to have our affections thus raised up against mere shadows , is as foolish and furious as the Caunii their beating the empty Aire with their clubs, crying out * *ὀκβαλλεν τὰς ἑνικὰς θεάς*, when there was no Object before their eyes to pursue. But I need not give any new notice that our Enquiry into this Mystery is professedly modest in more respects then one. And yet I cannot dissemble but that this Antichristian frame of things is so far emerged above the condition of a mere Idea, that it is in the main strokes thereof plainly prophesied of in the Holy Writ ; which I think I have made good, with evidence no less then Mathematical, in a Discourse touching that matter. And Divine prediction you know is a very safe pledge of future existence. Nay, the Series of time is so prefigured, and the continuance so determinately measured out, that I may safely adde that it has been more then an Idea for some Ages ; and, keeping my self still within the bounds of modesty, may farther averre, that it is so far from being a mere Idea, that it is a lively Image, or faithfull Transcript out of History, of what has been too often, too much, and too long in Christendom : And therefore to have declared who is most concerned therein, had been needlessly to have imitated the bungling practice of the ancient ignorant Painters, who not being able to draw their Pictures lively enough, were fain to write under one, This is a Bear, and under another, This is an Horse, or a Lion, or what-ever other Animal it was intended for.

That he could excogitate nothing that made more for the Interest of the Church of England then the draught of this Idea.

8. And upon the same account I must confess I thought it needlesse expressly here to pronounce who is not concerned therein. But to prevent all misapprehensions, and to stop the mouths of Ignorance and Malice aforehand, I have at the end of the above mentioned Discourse not onely declared, but proved, That the Church of England is not concerned in this Delineation, nay have fully vindicated her from all suspicion of Antichristianism. Which I wish I could with as good conscience doe for that

TO THE READER.

that Imperious Lady of Rome, whom I cannot deny but to be most concerned in this Description. But for our own Church, I do profess that I could not excogitate any thing which I could think in my own judgment made more for her Interest than the framing of this Idea. For considering how she is laid at by the Romanists on one hand, and the Sectaries on the other, corroding, undermining, and wearing her away on both sides; the Romanists pretending her Schismatical, the Sectaries Antichristian: what could be more serviceable or seasonable then to draw such a true and genuine Idea of Antichristianism, as that that Church which, compared with it, will appear to bear so near a resemblance thereto, may be for the future ashamed to call us Schismatics for not Communicating with her; and our selves being so fully assailed from all blemish of what-ever is really and truly Antichristian, may shame the Sectaries for their Schismaticalness in refusing to Communicate with a Church that is so apparently pure and Apostolical?

9. The weightiness of which design I hope may excuse the unexpectedness of my appearing again in publick. For if Croesus his Son, (as has been ingeniously apply'd in the like case) at the seeing of a Souldier make at his Father with a drawn sword, forced himself of a sudden out of his natural dumbness into this articulate vociferation against the Murtherer, ὦ ἄποκτε, μὴ κτείνῃς Κεγόων· surely all men will think fit (forasmuch as my dumbness or silence is not natural, but a kind of Pythagorick Ἐχεμῶδία arbitrarily imposed upon my self) that I should make no scruple to break it upon so indispensable an occasion as the succouring my Mother the Church in so great a jeopardy, not being reached at by one hand onely, but thrust at on either side, or rather, as the Psalmist complains, being compassed about with her enemies as with a swarm of Bees. But that she may timely quench or extinguish them like the fire of thorns (as is said in the same place) by the overflowing of the pure waters of the Sanctuary, or, which is all one, destroy them, not by the weapons of any Carnal warfare, but

And that his zeal for her Safety may well excuse this unexpectedness of his appearing again in publick.

A. Gel. Noct. Attic. lib. 5. cap. 9.

Psalm 118.

TO the READER.

in the might of the Lord and by the Power of his Spirit, ought to be the earnest desire and ardent prayer, not of my self onely, but of every dutifull Son of so excellent a Mother.

The summary Conclusion.

10. *This is a brief, but true, account of the Scope and purpose of my writing this Treatise; and therefore I am very confident that there is no man that is an hearty lover of the Church of England, or a due resenter of the common Rights and just Security of Mankind, but will be a candid acceptor and approver of my pains.*

H. M.


A

A
 MODEST ENQUIRY
 INTO
 THE MYSTERY
 OF
 INIQUITY.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

1. *That the Mystery of Iniquity or Antichristianism implies the secret undermining of the Ends of Christianity by such a Power as pretends to be Christian.* 2. *The inconvenience of describing Antichrist from Circumstantial characters, and leaving out the Essential parts of the Description.* 3. *The two general Principles of which Antichristianism does consist.* 4. *The right Artifice of drawing the true Idea of Antichristianism, with a distribution of the Draught into the two most general strokes thereof.*

1.  *That the Iniquity of that Mystery we are about to speak of is not open Prophaneness or plainly confessed Wickedness, is evident from the very Title, in that it is said to be Mysteious, covering it self under some shadow or shew of Equity or Godliness. Which kind of Mystery, though it may in some way or measure work in, or undermine any Religion at large that was instituted for the real Worship of God and for a Fence against Atheism and Prophaneness; yet it cannot be doubted but that by that Mystery of Iniquity, that Christians so often have in their mouths, is meant such a Mystery as is directed to the defeating the Purpose, and encroaching the Power and Efficacy, and to the hiddenly undermining the very Foundations of that Religion which is called Christian. For which reason, they also call this Mystery of Iniquity Antichristianism, and style the chief Authour and underpropper thereof (be it*

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one

one single person or body of men) by the name of *Antichrist*: whether you understand thereby *one that opposes Christ*, or *one that puts himself in the place of Christ*, pretending to act for, but indeed acting against the true Interest of his Kingdom.

2. The noise of these words and phrases hath filled Christendom with their Echo for some Ages together. But I do not remember that the hottest pursuers after this strange Beast, no not they that had thought they had found him and taken him, have left so perfect and essential a Description of his nature prescinded from external circumstances, that a man may have a due and full apprehension wherein this *Mystery of Antichristianity* does really consist; and therefore have left the world liable to think those things essential to this Mystery which are not, and those not to appertain to it that do: As if in the description of a *Bear* they should be carefull not to omit his collar and ring at his nose, and yet leave out some integral parts of the body.

But such imperfect and indistinct representations as these tend to nothing but the raising mens passions against things that are in themselves innocent, and the conniving at those that are truly vicious and hurtfull. As if, for example, a man should declare in gross the *Turk* Antichrist, or the *Pope*; not expressing what it was that did really constitute them such: The effect thereof would only be this, namely, without any further examination to congratulate our selves that we are neither *Turks* nor *Papists*, (though we may really have no small measure of the *Mystery of Iniquity* in us for all that) and to take offence at the sight of a *Turbant*, a *Crosier* or a *Miter* (or other things that have as little, or less hurt, if it be possible, then these) because they are found amongst the *Turks* or *Papists*. And yet methinks the most furious Reformers should not have so little wit in their wrath, as to think the Reformation incomplete, till with *Mattocks* and *Spades* they have dug down the *seven Hills at Rome*, and flung the earth with shovels towards the four winds of Heaven; for all that seems the most obvious circumstantial Characteristick of the *Whore of Babylon* (be that *Whore* who she will) that is to be found in the Scripture.

3. We see it therefore very requisite, that we may not quarrel with shadows, to seek out and propose such a Delineation of *Antichristianism*, as may let goe innocuous circumstances, and take in what is truly and essentially *Antichristian*; nor make any thing a part of the *Mystery of Iniquity* that has not any iniquity in it; as we cannot well any confessed Wickedness, but as it is the effect of some pretended Holiness. In these two things therefore in general does this *Mystery of Iniquity or Antichristianism* consist. First, *In the instituting of such Laws, or authoritatively teaching such Doctrines, and promoting or commanding such Practices, as naturally defeat and frustrate the true scope and purpose of the Gospel of Christ*. And then Secondly, *In the doing this with such artifice and so fair pretences, that they bear the world in hand in the mean time that they are doing the work of God, and promoting the Interest of the Kingdom of his Son Jesus*.

This, I say, in general is the very Nature and Essence of *Antichristianism*: And where this poison is imbibed into publick Authority; that either one Person,

Person, or Body politick, or jointly both of them together, if they be the first beginners or continuers of this *Mystery of Iniquity*, in a due latitude thereof, are assuredly that *Antichrist* there is such a noise of in the Christian world. And for others that have it not in such a measure, yet so far forth as they are Teachers, Abettors, or Obtruders of such Practices or Principles upon pretence of Religion, as naturally frustrate the End of the coming of Christ, they are so far also *Antichristian*.

4. Wherefore he that has duly considered, and satisfied himself, what is the great Scope of the Gospel of Christ, and finds but out (which he cannot easily miss) what things are contrary thereto; if he but colour them over with plausible pretences of promoting the Interest of Christ, he has *ipso facto* drawn the true Image or *Idea* of Antichrist, whereby he may surely know him wherever he is. Now that great Scope and those main concerns that the Gospel of Christ aims at are plainly these; namely, *The extirpation of Idolatry out of the world*, as also *A releasement of God's people from the unprofitable burthen of Judaical Ceremonies*, (which we may call the *Privative End* of the Gospel:) and *The exaltation of the Divine life; whose Root is Faith in God and of a world to come; and the Branches, Humility, Charity, and Purity*; as I have more at large discoursed in my *Explanation of the Mystery of Godliness*. And in this is comprized the *Positive End* of Christ's coming into this world.

CHAP. II.

1. *The rooting out of Idolatry by the Messiah prophesied of by Jeremy, That all the Gods that made not Heaven and Earth, should perish.*
2. *An explication of that Prophecy, and an assertion of our Saviour's right of being worshipped for ever as the Eternal Logos who made Heaven and Earth.*
3. *Proofs out of the Psalms, that the Messiah was to root out Idolatry.*
4. *Several places in the New Testament witnessing against Idolatry and Image-worship.*
5. *That the Spirituality of Christian Religion indigitated by our Saviour does abundantly evidence the unlawfulness of Image-worship or of what Idolatry else soever.*

1. *That God intended the rooting out of Idolatry by sending Christ into the World*, appears as well by those Prophecies of the Old Testament, that foretel that *all Idolatry shall be rooted out* (for by whom should it be done but by the *Messiah*, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed:) as by several passages in the New.

Of the first sort is that in *Jeremie* chap. 10. where the Prophet puts this prophecy in the mouths of the Jews that were carried captive into *Babylon*: *Thus shall ye say unto them, (saith he) The Gods that made not the Heavens and the Earth, they shall perish from the Earth and from under the Heavens*, But the preceding context is so lively and magnificent, and so close to our purpose, that it ought not to have been omitted. At the seventh verse

therefore, *Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations? for to thee doth it appertain: Forasmuch as among all the wise men of the Nations, and in all their Kingdoms, there is none like unto thee. But they are altogether brutish and foolish; the stock is a Doctrine of vanities. Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and Gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the Founder; Blue and purple is their cloathing, they are all the work of cunning men. But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God and an everlasting King: At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.* And then follows this Prophetick denunciation against every undue object of Divine worship; *Thus shall ye say unto them, The Gods that made not the Heavens and the Earth, they shall perish from the Earth and from under these Heavens.*

2. Things are exceeding clear in this Prophecy, saving in that comparison of the *King of Nations* with the *wise men of the Nations*, betwixt whom there is that infinite disparity, that the collation seems hugely improper if the *pure Deity* be here conceived to be compared with any *wise men* whatsoever. *Grotius* therefore ingeniously hinteth, that it is meant of some of the *wise men of the Nations* that had been translated into the number of their Gods, as *Taanites* for example: which a little helps out one terme of the comparison, these *wise men* being supposed to have been advanced to Divine honours after their death, and to have been reckoned amongst the Gods.

But I must confess even that in the 86 Psalm, *Among the Gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord, there is none that can doe as thou doest*, has often puzzel'd me, that the Prophet should vouchsafe to compare the Gods of the Nations, which were but Deified Mortals, or at best but particular Angels, or Dæmons in that higher sense, with the pure, infinite, and omnipotent Deity: which has made me often suspect that such passages as these are to be understood of the *Messias*, who was also to be incarnated and to become the true *David*, and thereupon, after his sufferings, to be declared *King of Nations* and the Worship of the whole Earth; according as it follows in that Psalm, *All Nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorifie thy Name.* And you know he was the *Logos* or *Word* which was in the beginning, without which nothing was made that was made. As the Authour to the Hebrews also witnesseth, *Thou, Lord, in the beginning laydest the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heavens are the work of thy hands.* Which is spoke of the *Messias*, his time being there so plainly decyphered, as appears in the 22 verse, *When the people are gathered together, and the Kingdoms to serve the Lord.* Whence that is also plain, that Christ shall be ever the same, and that his years shall have no end, and that this Prophetick denunciation, *The Gods that made not Heaven and Earth, shall perish from the Earth and from under these Heavens, cannot reach him.* But the worship of any thing else that is not the pure Deity, is to be cast away according to the meaning of that Prophecy.

3. That also in the 97 Psalm plainly shews that *Idolatry* is to goe down at the coming of Christ. *Confounded be all they that serve graven Images, that boast themselves of Idols; worship him all ye Gods: which the*

the Author to the *Hebrews* does expressly interpret of *Christ*, whereby he proves his Divinity, and doth therewith disapprove of giving any *Religious worship* to any but that which is truly the Deity; as I have noted in its due place.

4. As for the places in the New Testament, they are more copious, and not less exprefs. The first is that in the *Acts*, where when the Priest of *Jupiter* would have sacrificed to *Paul* and *Barnabas* at *Lystra*, by reason of the great miracles he saw done; they rent their cloaths and ran in amongst the people, crying out and saying, *Sirs, why do you these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities, unto the living God which made Heaven and Earth and the Sea and all things that are therein.* And what *vanities* are those from which they must turn, but from the giving of *Divine honour* to mere Creatures? The same Apostle also at *Athens*, in his Speech he made to them on *Mars-hill*, reads them a very round lesson against Idolatry. *Forasmuch then as we are the off-spring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto Gold or Silver or Stone graven by art and mans device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent.* Which exhortation certainly *Paul* made with the greatest earnestness that could be, it being said verse the 16. *ὁτι μαρτυροῦμεν τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτῶ ἐν αὐτοῖς*, that his spirit was in a very sharp fit, in a *paroxysm* of zeal, when he saw the City of *Athens* so given to Idolatry.

Again in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, he makes *Idolatry* the very Character of Gentilisme, which *Christ* came to reclaim the world from. *Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away to dumb Idols, even as ye were led.* And elsewhere in the same Epistle he exhorts them more copiously and vehemently: *Wherefore my dearly-beloved flee from Idolatry. The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to the Dæmonia, and not to God. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of the Dæmonia. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger then he?* And this was only about the meat sacrificed to these *Dæmons*; what had it then been to bow to their Idols? He speaks also very smartly on this subject in his second Epistle to these *Corinthians*. *What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? what communion hath light with darkness? and what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* And in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, he plainly reckons up *Idolatry* amongst the grossest works of the flesh, *Murther, Sorcery, and Adultery.* And therefore accordingly in the *Apocalyps* *Idolaters* together with *Murderers* and *Sorcerers* are threatned with the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, and are shut with obscene *Dogs* out of the holy City. And therefore assuredly *S. John* is in very good earnest in his dehortation from *Idolatry* in the close of his general Epistle. *And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, through his Son Jesus Christ: This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep your selves from Idols. Amen.* From these places, I think it is abundantly manifest That the divulging of the Gospel aimed at the taking away of Idolatry.

latry (that sottish depravation of Religion) out of the World.

5. And we may be still the more assured of it by those words from our Saviour's own mouth; *The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.* Where Grotius, and I think very truly, interprets ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ προσκυνεῖν, *sublatis ut ritibus, ita locorum discrimine.* And surely the Christian worship being so pure as to abhor from the voluminousness of Judaizing ceremonies, and the affixing of the residence of God to a consecrated place, as in the Temple of the Jews; *Imagery* and *Idolatry* must be abhorred infinitely more, as infinitely more inconsistent therewith. And if God may not be worshipped with an *Image*, much less any thing that is not God either with an *Image* or without it.

CHAP. III.

1. *What is meant by Grace and Truth coming by Christ.* 2. *Further Testimonies of Scripture to evince that Christ came to ease men of the Judaical burthen of Ceremonies. The meaning of χειρογραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν, and of δογματίζεσθαι.* 3. *That the Death of Christ upon the Cross was the solution of the Ceremonial Law of Moses.* 4. *Further proofs to the same purpose.*

1. **B**UT now *That the grossness and carnality of the Judaical Ceremonies and the unprofitable burthen of them was to be done away by the coming of Christ,* (which is the other point to be proved) is very apparent out of several places of Scripture. For the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ: that is to say, The Law, both Moral and Ceremonial, was given by Moses: but even that Moral Law was but such an one as *could not give life*, as the Apostle speaks; but the *gracious assistance* of the Spirit of God promised in the Gospel, that *does give life* and strength to walk according to the will of God. And then for the Ceremonial Law, both it, and indeed all things else happening to the Jews, were but *Types* and *Shadows*; but in Christ is the *Truth*. They were not what they made a show to be, and therefore in that sense may be said to be false: so as he that says that the Image or Picture of a Man or Horse is a Man or Horse indeed, pronounces false. And therefore our Saviour speaks true when he saith, *Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven, but my Father giveth you that true bread from Heaven.* Whenas yet it is said of the Manna, Psalm 78. *He gave them bread from Heaven to eat.* But it being but a shadow of the true bread from Heaven, which is Christ, it is said not to be the bread from Heaven. As in the Epistle to the Hebrews the Law is said to have a shadow of good things to come: and Paul to the Colossians, *Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new*

John 1. 17.
Gal. 3. 21.
John 6. 32.
Vers. 25.
Heb. 10. 1.
Coloss. 2. 16, 17.

new Moon, or of the Sabbath; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ's. So plain is it what is meant by *Grace and Truth coming by Jesus Christ.* For he is that *Truth* which was signified by the shadows of the Law; and by him is that *Grace* which was not afforded by the Law, namely the Quickning Spirit of God, the peculiar promise of the Gospel. Wherefore the Truth it self, the body of the Sun of Righteousness, being now risen with healing in his wings, it is time for obscure Shadows and dark Types to fly away.

2. And hence it is that *S. Paul* so stoutly exhorts the *Galatians* not to be held in bondage any longer within these shady covert's. *Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the Bond-woman and her son: For the son of the Bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the Free-woman. So then, Brethren, we are not children of the Bond-woman, but of the Free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage:* that is to say, neither with Circumcision nor any other useless and burthenfome ceremony.

Gal. 4. 30.

And again upon the same subject he speaks very triumphantly in the above-mentioned Epistle to the *Colossians*, in the same Chapter, from the 8 verse to the verse before recited. In which paragraph *χειρὶ γραφῆς δόγματι* the hand-writing of Ordinances seems most naturally to be understood of Ceremonial ordinances; that these were nailed to his Cross, and nulled by his death: but for that Law which is purely Moral and Eternal, and the observation whereof is the perfection of Humane nature, he came not to destroy it, but to rescue it, and perfect it by clearer glosses. Which interpretation agrees the best both with the matter in hand (which are Ceremonial ordinances, which the Apostle speaks of, *Traditions of men, and Rudiments of the World;*) and also with the signification of the word *δόγματι* in verse 20. *If you be then dead with Christ from the Rudiments of the world, τί ὡς ζωῆς ἐν κόσμῳ δόγματι*; why as living in the world are ye subjected to ordinances; to the decrees and ceremonial impositions of men? As it follows immediately, *Tast not, touch not, handle not;* which he calls the *Commandments and doctrines of men:* and not unlike those he mentions in his first Epistle to *Timothy*, *Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats;* which in one sense of the Text he seems to term the *seducing doctrines of Devils*, as suggested by them; over whom Christ is said to triumph here under the name of *Principalities and Powers*, by virtue of his Cross; and so treading them down, is supposed to trample upon their ordinances, those *Doctrines of Devils*; which they enviously and insultingly entangled poor mankind withall. And little better then such would the *Judaical Ceremonies* themselves be accounted, when having been once abrogated by God through Christ, they are again re-imposed by new imposers.

Coloss. 2.

Chap. 4. v. 3.

For that zeal that is inspired into men for the driving on superstitious ordinances and practices, contrary to the command of Christ and the honour of the Gospel, may be rationally conceived to come from Satan, the active enemy of the Church of Christ.

3. Like to this of the *Colossians*, is that of the *Ephesians.* For he

Chap. 2. 14.

is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh (that is, by his flesh crucified on the Cross, as before) the law of commandments contained in ordinances; which answers to *ἡ ἀποργαγή τοῦ νόμου*, the hand-writing of ordinances in the former. And by both these places it is evident That the Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross was the solution of all the Ceremonies of Moses Law, according as the Prophet Daniel had predicted; and That the everlasting Righteousness should take place, a Religion that would instruct us to worship God in spirit and in truth; and therefore should stand for ever, there being none more perfect to succeed.

4. And according to this tenour of the Gospel S. Peter, as well as S. Paul, is very earnest upon the point in that debate at Jerusalem, whether the converted Gentiles should be circumcised; where he concludes his speech in this manner: *Now therefore, saith he, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our Fathers nor we were able to bear? namely, ob ingentem illum numerum praeceptorum ritualium*, as Grotius has noted and superadded. And S. Paul is so zealous for the casting out the Bond-woman and her child, that he tells the Galatians roundly, Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. So industriously did the Apostles of Christ fling off from the Church that wearisome burthen of the Rites and Ordinances of the Mosaical Law.

And thus we are sufficiently assured of the Privative End of the Gospel, namely, That it was to eradicate Idolatry from amongst the Nations, and to null the Law of Moses in all the Ritual or Ceremonial ordinances thereof, as a troublesome and useless incumberment upon Christianity and the Churches of God.

CHAP. IV.

1. The Positive End of the Gospel summarily proposed.
2. The several grounds of honour due to Christ, and particularly of his Paternal Title.
3. Both God the Father and Christ the Authours of our Regeneration; and how the First Hypostasis being called Father does not exclude the Second from that Title in respect of his Church.
4. The other Titles of Christ plain of themselves.
5. The Divine life with its Root and Branches, the Second part of the Positive scope of the Gospel.
6. That such a Mysterie as upon Religious pretences does really supplant all the grand Ends of the Gospel, whether Privative or Positive, is Mathematically manifest to be that notorious Mystery of Iniquity.
7. The method of pursuing the particulars of this Mystery more largely.
8. The Falseness, Fraud and Mischief of every member of Antichristianism to be enquired into.
9. The Authour's serious desire that the Truth of the Description may be perused without Prejudice, and acknowledged without Tergiversation by them that are convinced.

1. The

1. **T**HE Positive Scope of the Gospel, as I said, and have elsewhere proved, is *The exaltation of the Divine life*: which is either by giving all due honour and obedience to Christ in whom this life did so eminently reside; or by promoting the increase thereof, both intensively and extensively in his members, that it may rise to a due height where it is, and get footing amongst those where it is not; that the whole Mass of Mankind, if it were possible, might be leavened, not with the leaven of Hypocrisie, but with the sincere doctrine and enlivening spirit of the Gospel of Christ.

2. That Honour and Homage we owe to the Person of Christ is to be considered chiefly in these five respects: *As he is our King, As he is our Priest, As he is our Prophet, As he is God Blessed for ever, and As he is in a particular manner* Πατήρ τῆς ἐκκλησίας αἰώνως, as * *Esay describes* * Ch. 9. him, that is to say, *the Father of his Church*. As it is written concerning the Logos or Eternal Word, That, *As many as received him, power is given unto them to become the sons of God: which are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God: According as our Saviour speaks to Nicodemus, That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, but that which is born of the spirit, is spirit.* It is therefore the Spirit of Christ whereby we are begotten into a new creature. *If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* John 1. 12. John 3. 6.

3. But this Spirit of Christ is also the Spirit of God the Father, and therefore our new creation, or Regeneration, is also attributed to him. *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works.* And S. Peter in his first Epistle, *Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us again, or regenerated us, &c.* But after in the same chapter he again brings the *Eternal Word* as a sharer in this action of Paternity; *Being born not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, διὰ λόγου ζωῆς αἰῶνος καὶ ἀφωσμένου ἐν αἰῶνα, per sermonem vivontem Dei & in aeternum permanentem*: though it may be also rendered, *per sermonem Dei vivontis & in aeternum permanentis*; and thus may refer either to God the Father, or to the Eternal Logos: As I conceive that may also in S. John, *He that is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed (that is, the Spirit of Truth, which is from the Father and the Son) remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* Ephes. 2. 10. Ch. 1. v. 3. Vers. 23. 1 Ep. 3. 9.

Wherefore as Christ is said to be *Head of all Principalities and Powers*, though God the Father be also rightly so styled; and Christ is likewise said to be the *Head of the Church*, though no man can deny but that God is so also, for he that is an *Husband* to his Church, is also *ipso facto* the *Head* of her: So Christ in like manner may rightly be termed the *Father of his Church*, although that be the ordinary appellation of the *First Hypostasis* of the holy Trinity. And therefore there being such a real respect of *Paternity* betwixt Christ and his Church laid in this so remarkable ground of *Regeneration* by his Spirit into a new Creature; I thought it both allowable and usefull to take notice thereof, and add this fifth

fifth Title to the rest, there being most hainous sins committable against Christ in this respect also.

4. That Christ is *our King, Priest, Prophet, and our God*, are Truths so generally acknowledged, and so exceeding plain, that I need produce no proof either of the things themselves, or of the fitness of the Phrase.

5. The other general branch of the *Positive* Scope of the Gospel is, *The spreading and propagating, the exciting and nourishing the Divine Life in the members of Christ, to the best of their capacities.* In which *Divine Life* is comprized *Faith in God, and a Belief of a Reward of righteousness in the other World*, as also those three excellent Evangelical Graces, *Humility, Charity, and Purity.* That these make up the grand Scope of the Gospel, I think any one will be sufficiently satisfied by what I have written in my *Explanation of the Mystery of Godliness.*

6. Now from hence it will follow with evidence and certitude plainly Mathematical, "That such a Mystery as in effect is a real counterplot and undermining as well of the *Privative* as *Positive* Scope of the Gospel of Christ, in the above-named particulars; that is to say, That Mystery that, in stead of ridding the world of Idols, pollutes the Church "with multifarious Idolatry; instead of easing of the Church of the burthen of Judaical ceremonies, fills it with a number of superfluous Rites, "either Judaical, Pagan, or pretendedly Christian; That Mystery that "makes Christ a King without power and laws, a Prophet without "prediction or instruction, that sets up corrivalls with him in Heaven "and on Earth, for both his High-Priesthood and Divinity, and eludes or "prevents the inchoation or growth of the New-birth by mischievous "devices and practices; That Mystery that naturally tends to the super-inducing upon the world Atheism and Infidelity, by magisterially obtruding upon mens belief the acknowledgement of such things as are "not only useless to be believed, but impossible to be; and lastly, That "Mystery that is the Mother of Pride, the Nurse of Uncleaness, the "School of barbarous Injustice and bloody Cruelty: This Mystery, I say, "that is so horrid, and Diabolical, and so Antipodal to both the Person "and Spirit of Christ, and to all the Christian Graces, (provided there "be but found a colour for these gross enormities, as if they tended to "the honour of Christ and the good of his Church) must needs be that "famed *Mystery of Iniquity*, and the very body of *Antichristianism*, with "the distinct Limbs and Articulations thereof.

7. Whose Image I having exhibited to your sight in this contracted Draught, I shall now endeavour more fully and amply to set it before your eyes; pursuing the parts I have enumerated in a more particular manner, and in such a method as will carry along with it a reflexion upon the universal nature of the *Mystery of Iniquity*, as it is opposite in a general respect to the *Mystery of Godliness*: that is to say, As those more comprehensive members of the *Mystery of Godliness* were *A venerable Obscurity, A communicable Intelligibleness, Demonstrable Truth, and desirable Usefulness*; so I shall trace along as I goe in every one of the above-mentioned Particulars of the *Mystery of Iniquity* these three general Depravations or Malignities; as namely, in opposition to the *Truth* in the
Mystery

Mystery of Godliness, gross and palpable *Falseness*; in stead of *Usefulness*, intolerable *Mischievousness*; and in stead of that venerable *Obscurity* joyned with *Intelligibleness*, the unwholesome and abhorred fogs of a worse then Egyptian darkness, wherein harbours nothing but deceitfull *Sophistry* and *Self-seeking Fraud*.

8. In brief therefore the *Falseness*, the *Fraud*, and the *Mischief*, shall be the points of inquisition upon every particular member of this *Mystery of Antichristianism*: whose *Idea* when we have fully set out, and demonstrated to be such, we shall then proceed further to enquire *Where it is actually to be found*; and by virtue of the said *Idea* to clear our own Church, that is guiltless, from the unjust suspicions and aspersions of malicious or inconsiderate spirits, that either misrepresent or misapprehend things, and so pass unrightfull censures upon what is at least allowable, if not praise-worthy.

9. He that is the Searcher of hearts and the Enlightner of our eyes, so purge all our Hearts from partiality and Hypocrisie, and so clear our Understandings, that what shall be penned down with truth and sinceritie, may be perused without prejudice, may be discerned with facility, and be acknowledged by them that are inwardly convinced without any flights or tergiversations; to the glory of God's name, the peace of his Church, and the advancement of the Kingdom of his Son *Jesus*, Amen.

CHAP. V.

1. *Instances of several specious pieces of Idolatry introducible into Christian Religion.* 2. *The overmuch streightening, or widening the Notion of Idolatry, taxed.* 3. *The usefulness of giving a true Notion thereof.* 4, 5. *That it is not restrained to the worshipping of Idols properly so called.* 6. *That any thing worshipped that is not God, becomes ipso facto an Idol; and of the Seventy's rendring אֱלִילִים ἱδωλα and χειροποίητα as well as θεοί, δαιμόνια, and μεγάλαι.* 7. *That they likewise render אֱלֹהִים sometimes ἱδωλα, as they do also Baalim, and עֲצֵבִים; which further argues that more general sense of Idol.* 8. *That an Idol and אֵל-אֲלֹהִים, i. e. Non-Deus, is all one in the estimate of God.*

1. **L**ET us begin then with the delineation of the first member of this hideous Mystery, opposite to the first branch of the Scope of the Gospel of Christ, which was *The ridding of the world of the impure worship of Idolatry*. I say therefore, if in stead of those manifold *Idolatrous worships* in Paganism there were introduced (upon pretence of the greater honour to God and Christ, and the better instruction of the people) the Religious worship of the Cross, as also the Image of God the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, the devotional invocation of the blessed Virgin, or any other Saints, or Angels; the worshipping of their Pictures, or Images; and the doing Divine honours (accordingly as it was practised toward the

the *Roman* Emperours) to a mere man upon account of his being the *Vicar General of Christ* and *Oecumenical Head of his Church upon Earth*; and lastly, the adoration of the consecrated Bread in the Eucharist upon the imagination that it is *transubstantiated* into the very body of Christ: I say, where these things are brought into the Church as true Doctrine and laudable Practice, they will not fail to make up one Limb of *Antichristianism*, and that a principal one too.

For the Doctrine is not true nor the Practice allowable, but gross and palpable *Idolatry*, (one of the most abhorred sins the Scripture takes notice of;) as you shall easily understand after I have with all possible caution searcht out the true Notion and definitive nature thereof.

2. This term *Idolatry*, though nothing is more frequent in the mouths and writings of men, yet there is nothing of so unsettled and fugitive a signification. For some, to excuse or palliate their grossly-disallowable Rites and Practices in Christian Religion, have restrained the sense of the word to such narrow limits, that according to their nice distinctions and restrictions the foulest Paganism will scarce be found guilty of *Idolatry*. Others, whether out of a fright and abhorrency of so detestable a crime, or out of an over-factious disgust and detestation of the contrary party, have so stretched the signification of the word beyond the natural meaning thereof, that not only harmless, but even laudable circumstances of Divine worship appointed by Authority will not fail to be stigmatized by them with that odious and reproachful name: whose zeal and passionate unskillfulness in amoving this grand error out of the Church has had an answerable ill success, in that they have not so much wrought a cure, as changed the disease, and bartered away one great evil for several others of something a lower form; such as *Scandal*, rash and *unjust Censure*, and *Superstition*; which are very evil and undesirable distempers in the Church of Christ, and the necessary Authours and Fomenters of unnecessary Schisms. And indeed if I had said only, that they had changed *Idolatry* into *Superstition*, it had been enough, and all, it including the rest. For *Superstition* being properly a Fear of displeasing God in such things as neither do oblige him nor offend him, arising out of an opinion of the good or evil of those things that are indifferent; Those that either out of ignorance, or some worse principle, ingender in the minds of men a superstitious averfation from such harmless and allowable actions, must needs make them obnoxious to *Scandal*, and tempt them to *rash and unjust Censures*.

3. Wherefore as well to excuse the innocent, as to discover the guilty, I shall endeavour exactly to set out the bounds of this great sin of *Idolatry*; that thereby we may know when it is committed, and when not; when it may be called by that so hatefull name, and when again it is Injustice and Uncharitableness so to term this or that action of Religious worship.

4. That the name or guilt of *Idolatry* is not to be restrained to the worship of an *Idol* only, is plain out of ordinary consent of Speech, when we discourse of *Idolatrous Nations* that worship the *Sun, Moon and Stars*; not considering whether they make any *Images* to them or no. For these *ἐμφανὲς καὶ αἰσθητοὶ θεοὶ*, these *conspicuous and sensible Deities*, as they

Origen. contr.
Cels. lib. 5.

they are termed by the Greeks, may easily be conceived to have allured the rude people to adore them, before they had either art or leisure to build Temples and erect Statues to them. From whence that Caveat is given by God to his own people in *Deuteronomic*; *Take ye therefore good heed unto your selves (for you saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire) lest you corrupt your selves, and make you a graven Image, &c. And lest you lift up your eyes to Heaven; and when you see the Sun, and the Moon, and the stars, even all the host of Heaven, should be driven to worship them and serve them.* So strongly enticing have they been to mankind to bestow Religious worship on them. These were the first Objects that gain'd the title of *theoi*, as being in perpetual Motion, as *Philo* has observed; which appellation was afterwards derived upon all other Deities whatsoever. And *Maimonides* also lays the first foundation of Idolatry in these.

5. But Nations sufficiently civilized, as namely the *Persians*, made shift to be *Idolaters* without carved Images or Idols. For they sacrificed on the tops of Mountains to the visible Heaven under the name of *Jupiter*, as also to the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Earth*, to the *Fire*, *Water* and *Winds*; all sensible Objects, but worshipped without any sensible figure or representation. And yet I think no man learned, or Idiot, will stick to style this Nation *Idolatrous*: As neither the ancient *Romans*, who worshipped their many Gods without the use of any *Idol* or *Image*, for near two hundred years together; as both *Varro* and *Plutarch* affirm.

6. Wherefore *Idolatry* is not only there where an *Idol* is worshipped, but where any thing is worshipped which is *not God*, whether that thing be visible or no. In which sense * *Gregory Nazianzene* defines *Idolatry* to be *Μεταθεσις τῆς προσκυήσεως ἀπὸ τοῦ πεποιημένου ἐνὶ τῇ κτίσει*. And * *Tertullian* pronounces that whatsoever is exalted *ultra humani honoris modum*, with more than civil worship, does *ipso facto* become an *Idol*. When they are not truly *אלהים*, they become by being worshipped *אלילים*, that is to say *אלילים non-Dii* (as some would have the notation of the word) *not Gods*, but *Εἰδωλα*, *Idols*, as it is often rendered by the *Seventy*, and also *χειροποιήτα*. And in the first of the * *Chronicles*, *πάντες οἱ θεοὶ ὅσους ἔδωκον εἰδωλα*, shews plainly that * *Εἰδωλον* is to be referred also to those things that are not carved Images. For the Nations worshipped the *Sun* and *Moon*, and the *Souls of men departed*, which are not *Imagery*, but *Natural things*. And therefore sometimes they render *אלילים* *δαιμόνια*, or *μεγαλῶνες*; the latter whereof must refer to those *invisible Demons* themselves, who being but *אלילים* in Scripture-account, their worship must also be *Idolatry*, and will without any scruple be acknowledged so by any one that either the sense of things or the force of words has left any impress upon.

7. This might also make the *Seventy* careless of translating *אלהים* always *θεοὶ*, when spoke of the Heathen Gods, but sometimes *εἰδωλα*; those Deities themselves to whom Idols were consecrated being but

* Chap. 28.
verf. 2.

Idols in this sense. And whereas they understood by *Baalim* those false Deities distinct from their Images (as appears from the second of the * *Chronicles*, where they translate עשה לבעלים גלופים ἐποίησε τοῖς Βααλεῖμ, *Ahaz made Statues, or Images, for Baalim*;) yet for the same reason they several times translate it ἰδωλα the *Baalim* themselves, whether the *Sun*, or the *Souls of men deceased*, being but *Idols* in this sense we speak of.

Grot. in De-
calog.

For which reason, lastly, I conceive they also translate עבדי ἰδωλα above a dozen times, and θεοὶ but once; whereas a learned Doctor of our Church conceives the word according to its original meaning (it signifying any cause of anxiety, grief, or frightfull passion) to note δαίμονες themselves chiefly, whose hard usages, and affrightfull appearances to dismayed mankind, brought in that kind of pusillanimity which the Greeks call properly δεισιδαιμονία, the *superstitious fear and disquieting dread of Demons*; which is so far from being supposed to proceed from the *Images* themselves, that *Grotius* has noted it as the complaint of *Varro* against those that had corrupted that purer kind of worship instituted by *Numa*, by their bringing in of Images, *Eos utique civitatibus suis & metum dempsisse, & errorem addidisse*. But every thing that has Religious worship done to it that is not God, becoming thereby an *Idol*, the *Seventy* may very well be excused for their proneness of rendring these words by ἰδωλα, which had been more properly and expressly in such and such circumstances rendred δαιμόνια. As their proneness in so doing is also again an argument, as I have already intimated, of the warrantableness of their both notion and expression, who call the worshipping of any thing that is not God, *Idolatry*.

8. To which God himself also witnesses that it is such, by declaring himself so affected at worshipping that which is not God; as he does at the bowing towards *Images*, which he forbids, giving this reason, *For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God*, *Exod. 20*. The original is אלה קנא. And *Deuteronomie*, the 32. he says, הם קנאוני ה' They have moved me to jealousy אלה בל-אל in non Deo, by that which is not God. Whereby we seem to be admonished wherein the nature of *Idolatry* does immediately consist; and that the worshipping of an Image is not *Idolatry* as it is an Image, but as that Image is not God; no Image being God, but that true and living Image of the Father, *Jesus Christ*. That therefore is the true and general notion of *Idolatry*, *To worship any thing that is not God*; whereby we forsake God himself, and devotionally prostitute our selves to every evanid representation or far-cast shadow of him, such as are but ἰδωλα ἰδωλων, *shadows of shadows* in infinite myriads of degenerations from him; and so provoke his jealousy by these multiplied *Baalim*, whereas He alone is to be our Lord and Husband. But this is a Truth so plain and acknowledged, that I need not have spent so much time in the verbal allusions to adde any countenance thereto.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

1. *That the Israelites worshipped Jehovah in the Golden Calf, proved out of Exodus.* 2. *That Elohim, though joyned with a verb of the plural number, is understood of the true God; with further testimony out of the 106 Psalm, that God was worshipped in that Calf, and what כבוד there signifies.* 3. *That the Golden Calf was no figure of the Egyptian Apis, but a Cherub.* 4. *Aaron's case of making the Golden Calf compendiously opened, as also the ground of Tacitus his ridiculous error discovered.* 5. *That the Golden Calves in Dan and Bethel were two Cherubim set up for the worship of the God of Israel, proved from Jeroboam's Politicks.* 6. *Also from Jehu, and Elias his zeal, and the instruction of the Assyrian Colonies by an Israelitish Priest.* 7. *That Micah's Ephod and Teraphim were also meant to the true God.* 8. *And yet both he and the Israelites in the Wilderness Idolaters, in their use of the Teraphim and Cherub in Divine worship.* 9. *That Jeroboam was also an Idolater in setting up the Calves in Dan and Bethel, proved out of Scripture.* 10. *Other Testimonies to the same purpose; and of the Idolatry committed in the Brazen Serpent.*

1. **T**HAT which seems more seasonable to inquire into is this, *Whether as there is Idolatry without the worshipping of Images; so there may not be the worshipping of Images without Idolatry, the Images being worshipped in reference to the true God.*

That to worship the true God by an Image, is Idolatry, I conceive is very plain from the children of Israel's worshipping him by the Golden Calf which Aaron made. For first, that they worshipped God by this Calf, is evident from what is written Exod. 32.4. where it is proclaimed, These be thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt: And verse 8. God there telling Moses what was done, They have (saith he) made them a molten Calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt. But it is manifest that this Calf did not bring them out of the Land of Egypt, but they brought it, I mean the materials of it: and that therefore they understood it only as a visible Image and Representation of the presence of him that did bring them out thence, namely of Jehovah the true God.

2. Nor is there any scruple to be made from the pronouncing thereof in the plural number, as if that *One true God* could not be meant there: For *Elohim* is not only as fitly said of one single Deity as of one single Image, but is really, and that frequently, said of this One God Jehovah. And *Nehemiah* reciting this passage, shews plainly that the sense is to be understood of one; he reading, not, *These are thy Gods*, but, *This is thy God, that brought thee up out of Egypt.* Nor does the verb being in the plural number make any infringement to this Truth. For אלהים joyned

* See Gen. ch.
20 v. 13
ch. 35. v. 7.

Psal. 106. 19,
20.

1 Sam. 4. 22.
Psal. 85. 9 and
63. 2.
Jer. 2. 11.

joyned with a verb of the plural number is notwithstanding understood of this One true God, as appears from * sundry places of Scripture: And to make all sure, *Aaron*, after he had made the *Calf*, is said to *build an Altar before it, and to make proclamation, saying, To morrow is a Feast to the Lord*, that is, to *Jehovah* the known God of the Israelites. And the Psalmist taxing this transgression of theirs, *They made*, saith he, *a Calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten Image. Thus they changed their Glory into the similitude of an Ox that eateth grass.* Which *Glory* whether you refer to God himself, or to the conspicuous Symbols of his residence, which later Ages did more expressly call כבוד *the Glory* (and indeed I think may be fetched higher then those times, *the Ark of the Covenant* being so called in the first of *Samuel*, and it may be Psalm 85. and according to *Munster* in the 63. and in *Jeremie* 2. if the ancient reading was כבודי, as *Grotius* would have it; and lastly in this very Psalm, if the ancient Hebrews read not כבודם but כבודי, not *their glory*, but *his glory*, as *Grotius* also suggests) I say, whether it be referred to God himself, or to his Symbolical presence in the *Ark of the Covenant*, it is manifest that the worship was intended to *God*, when they adored this *graven Image*.

Ezek. 1. 10.
Ezek. 10. 14.

Verf. 7.

3. Which as it is most certain from these Texts of Scripture, so it will seem less strange, if we do but consider that the *Golden Calf* which *Aaron* made was in all likelihood nothing else but the figure of a *Cherub*, such as was after made by *Moses* himself, and placed in the *Ark*. For *Cherub* signifies properly מִצְרַיִם a *Calf* or *Ox*, from כָּרַב to *plow*, and is one of those four Animals which are in the Chariot of God, in the vision of both *Ezekiel* and *S. John*. And it is remarkable in *Ezekiel*, that when he had reckoned those four several forms, of a *Man*, *Lion*, *Ox* and *Eagle* in the first Chapter, he repeating the same in the tenth, in stead of *Ox* puts the name of *Cherub*: *And every one had four faces; the first face was the face of a Cherub, and the second face was the face of a Man, and the third the face of a Lion, and the fourth the face of an Eagle.* The first therefore must needs answer to the *Ox* specified in the former. But in the first Chapter he observes generally of them all, that their feet were as the feet of *Calves*: which is no obscure intimation that *Aaron's* act was not so extravagant as it seems at first sight, he erecting such a Symbol of the Divine presence as was to be afterward repositied in the *Ark*, namely, the figure of a *Cherub*, or *Golden Calf*: But to conceit that so holy a man as *Aaron* proposed to them the worship of the Egyptian *Apis*, and made them an Idol of an Idol, to celebrate a Festival to *Jehovah* by it; is a thing so impious, incoherent and exorbitant, that it seems utterly incredible.

4. Wherefore in brief the case seems to stand thus. God having by *Moses* promised to his people his visible presence to conduct them into the Land of *Canaan*; which Symbolical presence was to be in the *Ark*, and especially in the *Cherubim*, on which he was seen to sit by *Aaron* when he was admitted into the sight of God in the Mount: He being therefore privy to the design of this manner of representing the presence of God by *Cherubims* or *Golden Calves*, and *Moses* having staid so long in the Mount,

Mount, that both *Aaran* and the people took it for granted that he was dead; they requiring of him that he should make good that promise of the sensible presence of God, to make Gods to conduct them to *Canaan*, or at least back again to *Egypt*, that they might not be lost and perish in a barren wilderness; he thought fit in this exigency of affairs to erect that Symbol of the Divine presence which was intended by *Moses*, and so made this *Cherub* in the form of a *Calf*, both out of skill and integrity. But it was the vainness and wickedness of the people to turn it into an *Idol* by worshipping it, and so to *Egyptianize* in the adoration of the God of *Israel*.

Which he endeavoured as wisely as he could to prevent, in chusing this form rather than that of an *Eagle*, *Lion*, or *Man*; as being the least alluring to Religious worship: which was the reason of *Moses* his choice also, who is thought to have made both the *Cherubims* in this shape. And that idle mistake of *Tacitus* and others, of the *Jews worshipping the head of an Asse*, may probably be grounded upon the seeming vility of these figures; as being little superiour to those low creatures: And therefore the more unlikely, say I, of ever being intended for Objects of worship, as certainly they were not, but only for Symbolical Representations of the Chariot of God and of his visible appearance to the Prophets, Which Visions themselves I do not doubt but were a figure or symbol of some very noble and substantial Truths, which would be too long here to dive into.

To this purpose *Moncaus* argues in his Treatise of the subject, where he pursues the matter more copiously: which if a man duely consider, he cannot imagine but the worship given to the *Golden Calf* was not intended for the *Egyptian Apis* or any other foreign Deity, but for *Jehovah* himself the Lord of *Israel*.

5. And there is the same reason assuredly of the *Golden Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel* which *Feroboam* set up, which will both give light to and receive light from this of *Aaron*, and joyntly prove that they were both such *Cherubims* as were in the *Ark of the Covenant*, and that the Sacrifices and Solemnities of the people were intended to *Jehovah*: As it appears from the first of Kings Chap. 12. where it is plain that it was a fetch of policy in *Feroboam* to set up those *Cherubims* or *Golden Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*, for to keep the ten Tribes from revolting to *Rehoboam* King of *Juda*, by their going up to doe sacrifice in the house of the Lord at *Jerusalem*. Whereupon the King took counsel, and made two *Calves of Gold*, and said unto the people, It is too much for you to goe up to *Jerusalem*: Behold thy Gods, O *Israel*, which brought thee up out of the Land of *Egypt*. Which had been false and ridiculous to avouch of any strange God; and it had been the most unpolitick action that could be, and contrary to his design, to offer them any strange God to worship. For could he hope so in a moment to take off their devotion from the God of *Israel*, whom they had so long served, even from their childhood; and so stop their going to *Jerusalem* at their set times of Solemnities? Surely no: But his meaning was, that they might serve the same God here at home, and save themselves the labour of such tedious journeys; and to this purpose

pose he had set up two *Golden Cherubs*, the acknowledged Symbols of his presence, the one in *Dan*, the other in *Bethel*, before which they might meet, and sacrifice, and perform their anniversary Solemnities to the God of *Israel* as well as if they went to *Jerusalem*.

6. And hence it is that when the worship of *Baal* and that of these *Golden Calves* came into competition, these latter worshippers are called the *Servants of the Lord*. And *Jehu* professes his zeal against *Baal's* Priests to be in the behalf of *Jehovah*, though he never ceased to worship the *Golden Calves*. *Elias* also abets the Tribes of *Israel* against such of them as were turned worshippers of *Baal*, as allowing them to be worshippers of the true God, though the *Israelitish* mode of worshipping him at that time was in those *Golden Calves*. *If the Lord be God, follow him; if Baal be God, follow him.*

And when the *Assyrian Colonies* were worried with Lions in *Samaria*, it is imputed to their ignorance of the worship of the God of the place, who was known to be *Jehovah*; and it was an *Israelitish Priest* that was sent back to teach them, who dwelt in *Bethel*, and taught them certainly after the manner of *Israel* to worship him in those *Golden Cherubims*, as they did from *Jeroboam's* time to that very day. So little doubt is there but that *Jehovah* was worshipped in those *Calves of Gold*.

7. A like Instance to which I conceive is discoverable in more early times. As in that of *Micah's Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and his consecrated Son, and devout Mother that had dedicated such a summe of silver to the Lord, of which an *Image* was made by the founder: His eager entertaining a Levite also, in stead of his Son whom he had consecrated to the Lord, and his blessing himself for his good hap in lighting on this Levite, saying, *Now know I that the Lord will doe me good, seeing I have a Levite to my Priest*. All this shews plainly that these *Teraphim* were consulted as the Oracle of the God of *Israel*, I mean as the Oracle of *Jehovah*: And the mention of the *Ephod* would easily induce one to believe that the *Teraphim* were, as *S. Jerom* conceits of them, in the form of the *Cherubims*. And this therefore was the worshipping of *Jehovah* by a bare *Image*, and is a second undeniable Instance of this kind of unlawfull worship.

8. For that this Religion of *Micah* was unlawfull, is intimated in that *Epiphonema* immediately subjoyned to the mention of his *house of Gods*, and *Ephod*, and *Teraphim*. *In those days there was no King in Israel, but every one did that which was right in his own eyes*. But to make short work. Either these *Teraphim* and *Images* were like the *Cherubims* which *Moses* made, or they were other prophane Idols: If the second, the *Idolatry* is so conspicuous we need pursue the proof thereof no further: If the first, we shall yet prove that to be down-right *Idolatry*, and thereby evince the second to be much more.

That the worshipping the *Golden Calf* in *Horeb* was *Idolatry*, though the worship was intended to *Jehovah*, is plain, both from that height of wrath and displeasure that God conceived against them for worshipping and sacrificing to the molten *Image*; *Let me alone, saith God, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them*: and also from *Moses* his being so transported into passion at the sight of the thing, that

that out of the heat of his Anger he cast the two Tables of Testimony, written with the finger of God, out of his hands, and brake them beneath the Mount. To which you may add the severe punishment, the slaying of the Transgressors, which Moses commanded, and the form of his confession of their sins to God: *Oh this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them Gods of Gold.* V. 31.

*Qui fingit sacros auro vel marmore vultus,
Non facit ille Deos; qui colit, ille facit.*

And this was the Sin of the people, even that great Sin of *Idolatry*, who by worshipping the *Golden Calf* that *Aaron* made, though they intended the honour to *Jehovah*, made an *Idol* thereof: As *S. Stephen* also gives sentence, *They made a Calf*, saith he, *in those days, and offered sacrifice to the Idol.* Acts 7. 41.

9. And *Divine Writ* gives the same censure of the *Golden Calves* of *Feroboam*, in whose days, and till *Ahab* was seduced by his wife *Jezebel*, the worship neither of *Baal* nor any strange God was admitted in *Israel*. Yet *Feroboam*, though he worshipped *Jehovah* in those *Golden Calves*, is said to have ordained *Priests for the high places* and * *for Devils*. The original has it פאנים *Faunis* or *Satyrs*, for the hairy *Dæmons* of the woods or mountains. The *Monticole sylvani* I suppose are alluded to, and that in reproach to his *Idolatrous* worship of the true God on the *high places*; though the *Seventy* translate it only *vanities*, which yet tends to the same sense; for they also translate *הבלי* (*vanities*) *ἡδωλα*, in several places. Again in the second Book of the *Chronicles*, there *Abijah* King of *Juda* speaking to *Israel*, upbraids to them their confidence in their multitude, and in their *Golden Calves* which *Feroboam* made them for Gods; twitting them thereby assuredly for their *Idolatry*; here answering to *שערים* in the forecited place, *Dii* to *Dæmons* or *Dæmonia*. 1 Kings 16. 31. * 2 Chron. 11. 15.

10. I shall only instance in one place more, in the first Book of the *Kings*, where *Abijah* the Prophet instructed by God sends this smart message to *Feroboam*: *Thou hast done evil above all that were before thee: For thou hast gone and made thee other Gods, even molten Images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back.* Which is the very same censure that the *Psalmist* gives of the worshipping of the *Calf* in *Horeb*; *They forgot God their Saviour, that had done great things for them in Egypt.* And yet *Feroboam's* and the *Israelites* fault was only the worshipping of God in those *Calves*, even that God that brought them out of *Egypt*; as appears from the very Title of their pretensions in both places, *These are thy Gods that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt.* But the natural meaning of the words of *Abijah* is this, That they doing *Divine* worship to any thing besides God, make thereby a God to themselves, distinct from him whose worship is incapable of any *Corrivalry* or *Copartnership*. But this worshipping of the *Golden Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel* being so like (if not worse) to the worship of the *Golden Calf* in *Horeb*, it had been enough to have proved the former *absolute Idolatry*, it necessarily following thereupon that this must be so too.

2 Kings 18. 4.

We might adde to these a fourth Instance, which is *The burning of incense to the brasen Serpent*; which certainly was not in honour to any strange God, it being a monument of those miraculous cures done by Jehovah the God of Moses. But it is so clear already, that nothing can be clearer, *That to worship an Image, though the honour be intended to the true God, is notwithstanding flat Idolatry.*

CHAP. VII.

1. *The worshipping that which is not God by an Image, a third mode of Idolatry.* 2. *Of the worshipping of an Image as such.* 3. *How the vulgar sort of the Heathen came to take the very Idols themselves for Gods.* 4. *What arguments used for the begetting an opinion of the residence of the Demons near their Statues.* 5. *What indications of their presence there, and how awfull the Images themselves became from thence.* 6. *The conceit of the Demon and dedicated Image's coalition into one person.* 7. *And that the worshipping of this Complicate was a fourth Mode of Idolatry.*

1. **T**HUS we have demonstrated two Modes or Manners of Idolatry; namely, *The worshipping of that which is not God without an Image*, and *The worshipping of the true God with one.*

From whence the evincement of a third Mode will follow, viz. *That the worshipping of that which is not God by an Image, is Idolatry*; nay, I may say, a *double-charged Idolatry.*

For if to give Divine worship to each apart be Idolatry; to worship both these unlawfull Objects at once is *double Idolatry.* And if the relation of the external Object of worship to the true God makes not that Object lawfull, no not when it pretends not to be the Shape or Image of the true God, (as certainly the *Golden Calf* did not pretend it, nor any one think it) then surely a false God cannot make an *Image* an Object of lawfull worship, no not though it were like it.

2. Nor can any *Image* of it self without reference to some other thing be a due Object of worship. For as the true God is rightly by the Psalmist styled *אלהי האלהים the God of Gods*; so certainly an *Idol* may well be esteemed *אליל האלילים the merest Nothing of all Nothings*, the vainest of all Vanities, that can be proposed to be worshipped religiously. From which consideration arises another sort of Idolatry, which is *The worshipping of an Image absolutely, without reference to any thing else*, (which would be Idolatry in the strictest sense, according to the notation of the word) if it were practicable. For it seems very hard to worship an *Image*, we knowing it to be so, merely in reference to it self; the very nature of an *Image* referring to something else.

3. But men may possibly worship that which is but an *Image*, without reference to any other thing; the Garishness or Dreadfulness thereof strongly working upon the minds of the more simple to conceit some strange

strange Divinity in it, which is not. Which according to some passages in Scripture seems to be the condition of the Vulgar sort of the Heathen. As in Psalm 135. 15. and again in the 115. 4. *עֲצֵי הָאֱלֹהִים* *Dolores* or *Terricula Gentium*, *The Fear and Awe of the Gentiles* (that is, their Gods) *are but Images of silver and gold, &c.* which Images though they were the next way to bring all Religion into contempt amongst the more crazy and naive, yet the Golden splendour and magnificency of them did, it seems, so perstringe the eyes of the simple sort, that they took them to be very Gods; as appears plainly out of these places of the *Psalms*, and very copiously out of the Epistle of *Jeremie*. Which censure both of *Jeremie* and of the *Psalmist* is notwithstanding to be understood, as not to engage us to think that the Heathen had no other Objects of their worship but the very *Idols* themselves. For (as I have above intimated) in all likelihood these *עֲצֵי הָאֱלֹהִים*, these awfull Objects of their superstitious worship, were first the *Dæmons* themselves; whether the Ghosts of the departed, or other Devils; who sometimes, though not so very frequently, have miraculously shown their presence in these Images or Statues; the same whereof being continued, conciliated that superstitious reverence to these Idols from the Vulgar, as if they had been living and powerfull Deities.

4. *Origen* speaks of the religion of these *Dæmons* near their Statues, whether by Magical incantation, or that, like to many smell-Feasts, they hankered near the Altars, to enjoy the nidorous fumes of the Sacrifices; *ἀρχαὶ μύσθων καὶ θυμῶν τῶν ἱερῶν* *ἀπορροαίς*, *liquor somely partaking of the diffused reek of the things Sacrificed.*

Origen. contra Cels. lib. 7.

It is likely the imposing Priests would pretend either of these to the people (though not in that odious scheme) as persuasions of the presence of the *Dæmons* themselves in these consecrated Places and Images. And truly the unctuous vapours from the burning of the Sacrifices seems a more suteable entertainment for them than the gross blood: Which yet *Demetrius* says the *Zabii* conceived to be their repast, and therefore ate it themselves to communicate with them. *Doct. perplex. part. 3. c. 40.*

5. But as appears by *Origen*, in his third book against *Celsus*, there were yet more evident demonstrations of the presence of these *Dæmons* in their Temples and Statues, by rending of Oracles, by healing of diseases, and tormenting the superstitious if they transgressed in any punctilio of Religious service to them. These he calls *δαίμονες μαγικὰς καὶ ἰατρικὰς*, whom he intimates to be smart monitours to them that transgress, *πρὸς τὸ δεισιπτεῖν* *καὶ πολλὸν καὶ ἀπαίδευτον*, to terrify the rude multitude. But whether these *terrours* were also by some frauds of the Priests, or merely from the peevishness of the *Dæmons*, I will not here dispute. But questionless it struck a great dread into the simple people of the Images themselves, as if there were a Power and Divinity in them. *Origen. contra Cels. lib. 3.*

6. But yet I am not come to what I was aiming at, which is, A conceit of so near an union of the *Dæmon* and the *Statue*, as if they were one sacred Animal or Person. For such certainly the *Tyrians* thought the Statue of *Apollo*, who, by binding it with golden chains, conceived they tied *Apollo*

Apollo himself so fast to them, that he could not goe away. As, the *Athenians* also seem to have presumed concerning the Image of *Victory*, who, by clipping her wings off, thought to keep the Goddes herself from flying from them.

Which opinion certain prodigious passages in these kind of Images might very well foment. As that in the Image of the God *Adranus*, who, when the *Adranites* were engaged in a warre, was seen to sweat copiously, as also to shake the top of his Spear; as *Plutarch* relates in the life of *Timoleon*. And * *Valerius Maximus* also writes how the Statues of *Juno Moneta* and of *Fortuna* spoke; the one signifying her willingness to goe to *Rome*, the other approving the manner of her consecration; *Ritè me matrona vidistis, ritèque dedicastis*.

* Lib. i. c.8.

The *Teraphim* also of the Gentiles (which were made under a certain figure or constellation of the Heavens) were erected to receive answers from as Oracles, and in all likelihood are the *Statua animata futurorum conscia*, which *Trismegist* speaks of in *Asclepius*, and of which kind of speaking Statues are sundry stories; but I have run out too far already.

7. The case that emerges from the consideration of the occasions of the people's thinking these dedicated Statues or Images (whether it be from the fame of Truth, or mere conceit) to be real Deities, is this, *Whether they can be said to be Idolatrous in giving Divine worship to them, not as to the Images of any thing else, but (according to their belief) as to true and living Gods*. In which point I conceive there is very little difficulty. For if the worship of that which is not God, under the notion of a saving and living Deity, be not *Idolatry*, there will be none found Idolaters, but those that think they wipe their mouth cleaneft of this Fornication, by pretending they worship not the Image for it self, but in reference to the Deity whose Image it is; but in the mean time give Religious worship to what is no Deity, but a dead Being.

But we have above proved, That the worshipping the *Sun* and *Moon* or any *Demon*, though without an Image, is *Idolatry*, (and I think there is no Christian that did ever stick to confess it;) wherefore the worshipping of an Image, or the *Complicate of an Image and a Demon actuating it*, for a Deity, which is not the True and Only Godhead Almighty and Infinite, but a Finite Being and such as there may be many others besides, is without all peradventure down-right *Idolatry*, which we may observe to be a *Fourth Mode* thereof.

CHAP. VIII.

1. That the Heathen held One Supreme God the Maker of all things.
2. Proclus his conceit of so uniting the Supreme Deity with a Magical Statue, as that the Complicate becomes one visible and Supreme God-head.
3. Whether the worshipping of this Magical Complicate by him that is persuaded it is the visible Deity, were Idolatry.
4. Wherein the sinfulness of Idolatry does consist, and that the worship of this Magical Statue was a Fifth Mode thereof.
5. The reduction of other cases to these Five Modes of Idolatry.
6. That the worshipping any thing but God, is Idolatry; and of Numa's casting away Image-worship, and of the affinity of his Religion with Pythagorism.
7. The first pollution of that Philosophy, and that the Object of Divine worship is as well One as Invisible.

1. **B**UT there is yet another case behind, with which we will conclude. That the better sort of the Heathen were not so ignorant of the Deity, but that they acknowledged the Unity of his Essence, his Omnipotency also, and his Omniscieny, were an easy thing to prove, if it were not admitted at the first offer. *Falluntur in nomine, sed de una potestate consentiunt qui Jovem principem volunt*, saith *Minutius Felix*. And I think he spoke sparingly in their praise in that he said they were mistaken in the name. For *Jovis* is so near to *Jovah*, that to deduce it from *Juvah* rather than from *Ἰοῦ* is like fetching the notation of *Fur* from *furvus*, No. Attic. lib. 1. c. 18. rather than from the Greek word *φῶρ** for which *Gellius* reprehends *Varro*.

That the inhabitants of *Thebais* worshipped the maker of the world, the Statue wherein they worshipped him witnesses for them, it being the Image of a man with an egge coming out of his mouth: As if the meaning was so exactly Mosaical, or Christian, as to intimate not only the Creator of the world, but that he created it by his word. And * *Dion Chrysostomus* and * *Maximus Tyrus*, both Heathens, do plainly profess that in their Images of Gold and Silver and Ivory they worshipped the most High God, the Maker and Conserver of all things. But I will not enter into any copious proof of this, the bare supposition serving my turn.

2. Let us therefore suppose that some Heathen Philosopher, who knew the true God of the Universe, but was not yet cleansed from the practice of Image-worship, should either himself believe, or at least for some ends best known to himself should fully perswade another, that there is some such mysterious Art as *Proclus* seems to glance at, in his short Treatise *De Sacrificio & Magia*: where, upon this ground, That there is such a close concatenation of Terrestrial with Celestial, and of Celestial with Supercelestial Essences, as also such a particular respect or Harmonie of severall of the one with severall of the other, he would insinuate to us, That there is a secret method of framing a *Magical Statue* out of certain choice

Pier. Hieroglyph. lib. 39.

* Dion. Chrysost. Orat. 11. *μηδ' ἡς θεότης τῷ θεῷ ἀνολύσ.*

* Max. Tyr. dissert. 38.

choice materials ; which Divine symbols rightly mingled, and adapted into a consecrated Image by some mysterious Priest or *Magus*, will become *unum tale quale Divinum existit secundum essentiam*, and therefore by power of cognation and similitude will not fail to fetch down *Jupiter Olympius* himself from his highest or inmost supercelestial throne, and make him vitally actuate this Divine Statue in such sort that the Statue and Divinity it self shall become one visible *Jupiter*.

3. The Question now emerging from hence is, Whether if a simple soul, being struck by the confidence and canting of this imposturous *Magician* into a full belief that this Statue is become the visible, but the true and eternal God of Heaven and Earth, should therefore worship that Divine Complicate as is pretended, (though it be really a mere figment) for the true God, this act of worship be blameless and irreprehensible, or whether it constitute a *Fifth* Mode of Idolatry. For it may be said in his excuse, it was well meant, and that he intended his worship for the true God ; which was not in the foregoing case. But, as I said before, if Ignorance will excuse from Idolatry, Philosophers will be the only men that will be found capable of that crime. And in the former case, though they had not so true a notion of God as is competent but to One, yet they thought they had lighted on a due Object of Religious worship, if that might plead their excuse. And he that, in this last case, had the right notion of the true God, yet misses the mark in application, and adores a mere Idol. And though it be in reference to the true God, I mean, really meant to him ; yet to serve him in an Idol, is Idolatry ; but to take an Idol to be him, far worse.

4. In brief, the sinfulness of any Idolatry, towards God, consists chiefly, if not solely, in either a kind of *Injustice to him*, or *Reproach of him*, or both. Now I demand of any man whether it be not a greater *Reproach* to the true God to take a mere Idol to be him, then to apply that worship which we use to him (and which always falls infinitely short of him) unto that which is but an *Idol* : or whether it be not a lesser piece of *Injustice* to take that mite of honour (for all that we can doe is no more) which is due to God, and give it to an *Idol*, then to take God from himself, as it were, by taking that to be him which is so infinitely debased below him. As it would be a greater piece of *Injustice* to steal a Prince out of his cradle, and leave a Changeling in the room, then to take away his mantle to wrap a Changeling in ; and a far less *Reproach* to fit a Scepter and *Tiara* to the hand and head of *Cyrus* his Ape, and then doe the *Persian* reverence to him, then to take this Ape to be King *Cyrus* himself. For the other may be interpreted only a ridiculous excess of respect and homage unskillfully intended to the King himself in thus royally adorning and reverentially courting his Ape : But this latter the grossest and most sottish *Reproach* imaginable ; namely, for want of a duely-figured *Idea* of a Royal Prince, not to distinguish so Heroical a personage as King *Cyrus* from an ordinary Ape or Monkey. And yet that Mysterious Statue above mentioned, into which the prestigious *Magus* or Pagan Priest would pretend to have vitally incorporated the true God of the Universe, any one will acknowledge to be more vile then these vilest of

of Animals. So plain is it that this *Fifth case* will constitute a *Fifth Mode of Idolatry*, and that a very rank one too.

5. And these *Five Instances* of Idolatry shall serve our turn to have recourse to; as plain patterns of that so heinous a crime, there scarce being any case which is not reducible to these either directly, or analogically. For the Religious worship of *Rivers, Plants, or Animals*; such as the *Egyptians* worshipped, as they are natural things, are to be referred to the first *Classis*; as Representatives of a more hidden *Numen*, to the second. *Pictures* also to the second; and *consecrated Pillars and Stones*; suppose they have no Image on them, are to be referred to *Statues*, if Divine worship be done unto them: As that Stone which had only the footstep of *Hercules* on it, which the *Thracians* worshipped; and another four-square one which *Maximus Tyrius* says was worshipped by the *Arabians*. To which you may adde the *Lapis Manalis* of the *Romans*, and their *Terminus lapideus* in the Capitol.

Pier. Hierogl.
lib. 49.

6. And in brief, to hold you in no longer suspense; upon the view of all particulars, the common Notion or *Idea of Idolatry* does undoubtedly consist in this, namely, *In the giving Religious or Divine worship to any thing that is not truly God*; as certainly no Visible thing is, that either Nature or Art can exhibit. And therefore it is said in *Deuteronomie*; *You heard a voice, but saw no similitude*. According to which is that *Dogma* of *Pythagoras* which *Plutarch* notes in the life of *Numa*, Οὐκ ἔστιν εἰδὸν ἢ παύλιν, ἀθεῶν δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπων καὶ νοσίων εἶναι τὸ πρῶτον. Which made *Numa* cast away all *Images* in Divine worship, but he erected a Temple that bore the similitude of the World, that great and august Temple of God, placing the τὸ ἀσβεστον πῦρ, the Vestal fire, in the midst thereof. Wherein he did also *Pythagorize*, though he lived some ages before *Pythagoras* flourished. Which is a witness of an happy combination of the profoundest skill in Nature and the purest Religion, in that Philosophy which was afterwards called *Pythagorical*, of any that ever could be found, out of the acknowledged Church of God; and may well amuse us from whence they had it; if not from thence.

Chap. 4. v. 12.

7. But then the purity of this Philosophy abated, when ever they admitted the *worship of Angels*. For the due Object of our worship is *One*, as well as *Invisible*: Hear, *O Israel, the Lord thy God is One*, and there is no God besides him: of which the immediate consequence is, that he alone is to be worshipped; according as our Saviour Christ has also ratified it, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve*. And the Authour to the *Hebrews* arguing the Divinity of Christ, produces that in the *Psalms*, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*; Which, if Religious worship were not due to that alone which is God, would not infer Christ's Divinity.

Deut. 6. 4.

Luk. 4. 8.

Chap. 1. 6.

And lastly, even the very second Council of *Nice*, who were over-favourable to Images, did yet condemn the *Arrians* of Idolatry in holding Christ but a Creature, and not very God. And *Nestorius* was stigmatized with the odious style of ἀνθεωπολάτρης or *Man-worshipper*, in that he held Christ a mere Man. For both the *Arrians* and *Nestorians* held that Christ was to be worshipped, though he was but a Creature; which that

Synod concluded absolute Idolatry, whether the worship be with an Image or without it. As also the Synod of *Laodicea* makes the praying to Angels Idolatry. And *Epiphanius* concerning the *Persians*, he says they abhor Images, and yet they worship Idols; meaning the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Fire*. *Gregory Nazianzen* likewise (as I have above noted) places Idolatry simply in transferring that worship which is due to the Creatour, upon the Creature; according to which notion *Aquinas* also and *Bellarmino* define it. And, lastly, *S. Jerome* roundly affirms *Idololatram factum esse, si quis tres Deos credit*. See Dr. *Rainolds*, *De Romana Ecclesia Idololatria*.

Lib. 2. cap. 9.

So plain is it that Idolatry is not confined to the worshipping of an Image, but to the admitting of more Objects of Divine worship than that one true God. For the worshipping any more is that עבודה זרה, as the Jews call it, and is most frequently and most significantly termed in Scripture *Fornication*, which looks more at the Plurality of the Objects of worship than the Kinds of them. For this Spiritual Fornication is committed where we worship any thing besides him that is the Creatour and Conserver of all things.

CHAP. IX.

1. The necessity of knowing what Religious worship is, for the discovering of Idolatry.
2. The faultiness of the distribution of Worship into Latria, Dulia, and Cultus civilis.
3. That Christ only, who is Θεάνθρωπος, has such a middle Excellency as may admit Religious worship.
4. That the excess of Excellency in God above that in Saints and Angels is so infinitely more than the excess of excellency in Saints and Angels above that in Men, that it is extremely forced and irrational to allot worship of one denomination to the first and second, and not rather to the second and last, which, they being fellow-citizens, might rightly be called Civil.
5. That no kind of Religious worship is due to Saints and Angels, proved by the Angel's refusing to be worshipped by S. John.
6. And also from the near affinity of our natures with theirs.
7. To whom Origen pronounces Good men equal, nor allows the glorious Stars, though they were intellectual, to be worshipped.
8. That the Religious worship of Saints and Angels is no duty of ours, as being reducible to the Precepts of neither Table.
9. That Religious worship is but One, and due to God only, proved from our Saviour's answer to the Devil.
10. As also from the Authour to the Hebrews, arguing the Divinity of Christ from Religious worship due to him, with several other testimonies.
11. An Answer to an Objection.

1. **T**HUS we have found out the adequate latitude of the Object of Idolatry; that it is whatsoever is not truly God, πᾶν τὸ μὴ ὄντι ὁ Θεός, as the Apostle speaks to the *Galatians*. But unless we have also the Knowledge of what is Religious or Divine worship, and when or by what we give this worship to that which is not truly God, we shall be still at a loss

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loss how to discern when our selves or any one else commits *Idolatry*, and when not.

2. There are some who for the better palliating their unjustifiable practices have framed a smooth story; namely, That there are as many kinds of *Honour* or *Worship* as there are of *Excellency*; and that therefore there being three kinds of *Excellency*; *Divine*, *Humane*, and a *middle betwixt Humane and Divine*; as that Supernatural grace and glory of the *Saints* and *Angels*; there are also three kinds of *Worship*; *Latria*, *Dulia*, and *Cultus civilis*. But the distribution had had less fraud and better Logick in it; if it had been bipartite; for then would have appeared more plainly what kind of *Worship* they mean by *Dulia*. For they will not have it *Civil worship*; in that it is a distinct member therefrom. It remains therefore that it must be *Religious worship*; though they were afraid to speak out what they harbour in their breast. For indeed *Religion*, which in its prime and proper sense is nothing else but *Cultus Numinis*, belongs *de jure* only to the true God; and if it be transferred to any thing else, it is *Idolatry* or *Superstition*.

But if they would have dealt above-board; and like honest men and exact Logicians, they should have distributed *Honour* or *Worship*; first into *Religious* and *Civil*; and then, according to the sense that they intended, subdivided *Religious worship* into *Latria* and *Dulia*. But this being craftily aimed at and supposed, though not so plainly expressed, and indeed being the chief thing intended, That *Religious worship is due to Saints and Angels as well as to God himself*, I shall direct my answer only against this mistake.

3. First therefore I say, That that ground of allotting *Religious worship* to *Saints* and *Angels* is very weak; namely, *because they have a middle excellency betwixt God and man*. For it is plain they have not in a due and strict sense; that being a Privilege belonging to Christ alone, who is the acknowledged *Deus deus*, *God-man*; and therefore may justly be worshipped with *Religious worship*. Wherefore there being nothing that has truly a *middle excellency* betwixt God and Man, (as a *Zoophyton* may be rightly said to have a middle excellency betwixt an Animal and a Plant) saying the Man Christ *Iesus*; there is no Creature capable of *Religious worship* besides him: nor is he indeed capable thereof but in virtue of that Mysterious union with the true Godhead; and thereby becoming as well God as Man.

4. And then again, there is another fraud, and indeed the more principal and original one; in the distribution of these *Excellencies* immediately into three, when as it had been more faithfully and Logically done to have distributed *Excellency*; first into *Created* and *Increated*; and then *Created Excellency* into that of *Saints* and *Angels*, and that of *Men*. But hereby the boldness and grossness of their assigning *Religious worship* to that which is but a Creature would have appeared at first sight; the Creatour standing in contradiction to it, who is infinitely more Excellent than any glorified creature whatsoever; or rather, whose degree of Excellency above the most glorious Creature that is, is infinitely greater than the degree of Excellency of *Saints* and *Angels* above *Men*.

Heb. 12.

Whence appears what a rash and forced thing it is to hold together two Excellencies betwixt which there is that infinite distance, in one common capacity of receiving *Religious worship*; I mean the *Divine Excellency*, and that of *Angels* and *Saints*: whenas the *Humane Excellency* and that of *Saints* and *Angels* are infinitely nearer one another, and therefore infinitely more fit to receive worship of one common denomination to both. Which may very well be termed *Civil*, the glorified *Saints* and *Angels* and *Good men* being but *fellow-servants* and *fellow-citizens* of that new *Jerusalem* which reaches from Heaven to Earth; according as it is written, *But you are come to the Mount Sion, and to the City of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, and the Spirits of just men made perfect.* Which shews plainly that *Saints* and *Angels* and *Good men upon Earth* are all of one communialty, Citizens of the same City, the new *Jerusalem*; and *fellow-citizens* you know do not give *Religious worship* one to another, but only *Civil*.

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5. Nor yet *fellow-servants*; as the Angel argues to *John* in the *Apocalyps*; *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou doe it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimonie of Jesus: Worship God.* Now if the Angel here refused *Civil* worship, how groundless a thing were it, nay how disallowable, to have offered him *Religious* worship? And if he refused *Religious* worship though present, how unlawfull is this worship, suppose but *Dulia*, to a Saint or Angel being absent? And if that worship tendred was *Latria*, and not *Dulia*, why did not the Angel rather say, *I am thy Fellow-creature, then thy Fellow-servant?* And lastly, if *Dulia* be a warrantable worship, and rightly given to *Angels*, why was not that Angel so charitable as to interpret *John's* worshipping him, to be that kind that was lawfull and warrantable? or why was he so uncharitable to the Church, or injurious to his fellow-*Angels*, as to vex the one with *Scrupulosities* about this duty of worshipping *Angels* and *Saints*, by his so nice declining the *Homage*, and to deprive the other of their due, by his so eminent example, that in all likelihood would be so prevalent with the Church, that it would hazard the belief of the whole duty of *Angel-worship*? But I believe the distinction of *Dulia* and *Latria* is so subtil, that the eye of an Angel could never spie out any such chink or least crack in *Religious* worship, whereby it might be broke asunder, or so divided that any the smallest part thereof may fall to the share of that which is not truly God; as *Saints* and *Angels* assuredly are not. So plainly doth it appear both from the sense of Scripture, and that infinite disproportion betwixt the distances that are found betwixt God and the Creature, and betwixt the Creatures themselves, that only *Civil*, not *Religious* worship is competible to them.

6. But thirdly, There is not only this infinitely-vast distance betwixt God and a Creature, the best Saint or Angel that is; but there is (which I have already given an hint of) a very close cognation and near affinity of nature betwixt *Saints* and *Angels* and *Good men*. For as for the glorified *Saints* and *Good men upon Earth*, besides that they are of the same species in their natural respects, so their *Graces* are alike, though not
in

in the like measure; they both being Regenerate by one and the same Spirit, and therefore are both in a supernatural condition. How then can that Honour due to the one and the other *toto genere differre*, that one must be *Religious* worship; the other *Civil*?

And there is so little difference betwixt a glorified Saint and an Angel, that a Good man will be found to bear the same proportion of excellency to both; and therefore it is plain that *Religious worship* is due to neither;

7. *Origen*, though he can admit the Sun and Stars (out of his want of better skill in Philosophy) to be ζῶα λογικά & αἰθεράσια; to be rational and virtuous creatures, nay so holy and so good as to put up their prayers uncessantly to God through his only begotten Son; yet he does strenuously dehort from adoring them or praying to them: which creatures notwithstanding were vastly more glorious than any glorified Saint; if they were such as *Origen* surmises, ὁ μόνον διὰ τὸ θαυμαστόμενον καὶ οὐ πολλῶν αἰσθητῶν φῶς, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ νοητὸν & ἀειδιόν; not only in regard of their sensible light admired by the Vulgar, but for the true and intellectual. How far think you then would this holy Father have been from allowing *Religious worship* to either Angel or Saint? Nay he speaks a bold word in another place, Ἄλλ' ἔδδ' οὐ καὶ αἰθεράσια & μακάρεα, But neither are the good and blessed Genii or Angels; as we call them, saith he, above men once accomplished in Reason and Vertue. How could he then ever have dream'd of giving *Religious worship* to Saints, in whom there is something a nearer likeness or cognation with us?

Contra Cels.
lib. 5.

8. Fourthly, If there be any such *Religious worship* as *Dulia* to the duties of which of the Two Tables does it belong? to the First or to the Second Table? The Second concerns our duty to our Neighbours. But if Saints or Angels be our Neighbours, how comes *Religious worship* due to them? If they be not, how come the Dues of the Second table to be challenged by them? If *Dulia* therefore have any place at all in the Tables, we must, according to our adversary's supposal, be referred to the First. But to which of the Commandments therein? Does God his forbidding to have any Gods besides himself infer Divine worship due to Angels or Saints? or his being a Jealous God, that his pleasure is to be worshipped in an Idol? For such is every thing that is not God; and yet is *Religiously* worshipped. Wherefore he that will assert that *Dulia* is a duty owing to Saints and Angels, must forge a Third Table for it, and have the impudence to adde it to the Decalogue; and blame *Moses* for a very great omission. For there were as worthy Angels, and as capable of Religious worship, in his time as ever there were since.

9. Fifthly and lastly, Those two places which I produced to prove That God alone is to be worshipped; I will also prove That Religious worship is but One: as that in *S. Luke*, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve. The force of which Answer made to the Devil by Christ, when he would have tempted him to fall down and worship him, surely consists in this, That no Religious worship is to be given to any but to God alone. For that the Devil did not require that which is called *Latria*, is evident in that he did discover himself not to be the Highest Numen, in acknowledging that the disposing of

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the Kingdoms of the Earth and the glory of them was *but committed to him* from another, *ὅν παραδίδωμι μοι*, and therefore he had them not from himself, and consequently did not pretend to be the most High God from whom are all things. Wherefore the Devil could not be so unreasonable as to expect, nor so foolish as to demand, that our Saviour should doe any Worship unto him as to the most High God, whenas he had already confessed himself not to be so: but that which he drove at was to get him to doe *Religious worship* to him, such as is done to the many Gods of the Nations on this side of the notion of the most High.

But the sense of our Saviour's answer is, That there is not any Religious worship at all belonging to any saving to God alone: and being out of patience (if I may so speak) at the motion to so impious an Act, he calls him *Devil*, for that so enormous a suggestion; none but *Devils* either requiring or admitting the doing of any *Religious worship* to them. He does not abstain from worshipping him because he was a *Devil*, but concludes him a *Devil*, because he not being the true God, would yet be Religiously worshipped. Nor did he answer, *Thou shalt only worship God and the good Angels*; but, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve*. Wherefore there is *but one only Religious worship*, namely that which is due to God.

10. The like also is manifestly inferred from that to the *Hebrews*, where the Authour of that Epistle proving the Divinity of Christ, cites that of the Psalms, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*: which questionless is understood of *Religious worship*, or else it would be nothing to the purpose; and yet if there be two kinds of *Religious worship*, *Latria* and *Dulia*, it will be still as little. So plain is it that there is *but one kind of Religious worship*, which is appropriate to God alone. Nor could the *Arrians* by the Council of *Nice* be justly deemed *Idolaters*, nor *Nestorius* an *ἀνθρωπολάτρης*, if there be more kinds of Religious worship than one. For neither *Nestorius* nor the *Arrians* could mean by that worship they gave Christ, the worship of *Latria*; for that had been expressly to acknowledge him to be what they so obstinately denied him to be, namely, the true God.

Wherefore the Synod and *S. Cyril*, and as many else as judged the *Arrians* *Idolaters* and *Nestorius* an *Anthropolatra*, do plainly give witness that *Religious worship is but One*.

11. Nor can that affectionate respect we shew either to the Bible when we kiss it, upon the taking of an Oath, or that which we doe to the holy Prophets of God, or his Priests and faithfull Ministers, when we reverence them as such, disturb our account, or pretend to an example of another kind of *Religious worship*. For I absolutely deny that it is any *Religious* either respect or affection at all to the Bible, or to a man of God; but that out of that *Religious* respect and affection we bear to God himself, another emerges toward those things that relate to him, but quite of another kind; to persons, *Civil*; but to inanimate things, if they be compared with persons that are holy, it were scarce any boldness to adventure to say it is a species of respect *less then civil*. But differences are where we have no names to call them by.

And

And it seems to me as absurd to infer, Because I have a respect for the Bible or any holy man of God, from a *Religious* regard I bear to God himself, that this to the Bible or the holy man is also a *Religious* reverence or respect; as to infer, because a woman out of that conjugal affection and respect she bears to her husband, has also from thence (which otherwise she would not have) a respect and affection for his spaniel, that that affection or respect she bore to the spaniel, should either be, or be called, a conjugal affection: which is harsh and ridiculous at first sight,

CHAP. X.

1. *A right distribution of Worship into its kinds.* 2. *The Definition of Religious worship.* 3. *That the exhibiting of honour to any undue Object, though forcedly or feignedly, by Signs appropriate to the acknowledgement of the Divine Excellencies, is palpable Idolatry.* 4. *And that therefore there are no stints, or specifick degrees of Religious worship; no Dulia, nor Hyperdulia, but all Latria.* 5. *That Religious worship is not applied to a thing by directing it towards it as a Circumstance, but as an Object; and therefore the misapplication thereof as to an Object is requisite to Idolatry.* 6. *But not that this application should be made as to God himself.* 7. *That the Heathens themselves never committed such a piece of Idolatry, as to give Religious worship to that which they knew not to be the Supreme God, as to the Supreme.* 8. *That Religious worship being but One, makes every application thereof to what is not God, Idolatry.* 9. *That the incarnation of the Divinity of Christ proves every Creature incapable of Religious worship.*

1. **W** Herefore we being so well satisfied concerning the *Oneness* of *Religious worship*, we shall be able to make a more true and logical distribution of *Honour* or *Worship* then what was above produced; dividing it immediately, first into *Religious* and *Civil*; and then *Civil* into *Political*, *Oeconomical*, and *Moral*; and *Political* again into *Secular* and *Ecclesiastical*; or else into *Temporal* and *Spiritual*, either terms being well enough known. By *Moral worship* I understand such honour or respect as passes from private men one to another, or at least as to private, upon account of *Moral worth*; such as *Liberality*, *Wisdom*, *Fidelity*, and the like: the rest the very words will interpret. Nor is it pertinent to my scope to meddle with any but the first, namely, *Religious worship*; for the understanding the nature whereof I have taken all these pains hitherto.

2. Which I conceive is rightly defined thus: *A Devotional acknowledgement of the incommunicable Name or Excellency of God, by the performance of some outward Rite or Ceremony appropriated to that end or purpose, namely, of externally signifying our inward acknowledgement of the Divine Name or Excellency.* This is a true and the most general definition

definition that can be made of *Religious worship*. For that Religion that is placed in worshipping Saints, Angels, Dæmons, Images, and the like, is truly Irreligion, Idolatry, or Superstition: but is no more to be called *Religious worship*, then Vice Vertue, Injustice Justice, or Cowardise Fortitude, whatever abuses of the word may have crept in by the unskillfull and inconsiderate.

3. Now since the giving of *Religious worship* to that which is not God, is Idolatry, and that *Religious worship* in this true and proper sense is nothing else but a *Devotional acknowledgement of the Divine Eminency, by certain appropriate signes significative of this our agnition*; it is demonstratively evident, that where there is such a *devotional acknowledgement* by these signes made to that which is not God, it is *ipso facto* Idolatry.

Nay though these *appropriate signes* were used without Devotion by the party toward the supposed Object, (which is worthy our observation, and true; because a plenary pravity or defect is not requisite for a vicious action) and were intended only by other men to be directed thither, or only were interpretable by custom to be so directed, it were *Idolatry* notwithstanding: Or else the sin of *Idolatry* could not be forced upon any man, nor needed any either Jew or Christian to have scrupled the flinging incense on the Altar to any Pagan-Deity, no not to have sacrificed whole Hecatombs to them, if their purses would have born it: And whoever died martyrs upon this account, it were to be imputed rather to their madness or folly then to any true and solid piety.

Wherefore as it would be *Blasphemy*, though it were extorted by fear, and that a mans heart gave not assent thereto, to say, *That Jesus Christ was not the Son of God, but an Impostour*: so the using of the *Appropriate signes* of the acknowledgement of the Divine Excellency to that which is not God, though the assent goe not along, is notwithstanding the acknowledging of that to be God which is not, (as that *Blasphemy* was the denying of him to be that was) and therefore cannot chuse but be flat Idolatry.

4. And if Idolatry be committed without the parties devotion toward the undue Object, then let a man phansy this external *Religious worship* accompanied with as small degrees of Devotion or inward intention as he pleases, it will not fail to be *Idolatry* still. Which Confectary is of singular use for the convincing men of the folly of such subterfuges as are sought in these new-coyned terms, of *Dulia* and *Hyperdulia* and *Latria*, whereby they would signifie certain *differences* or *degrees* of Religious worship, indeed distinct *kinds* thereof; whenas it can be but *one*, according to that true Definition we have given of it. For every act or effect of our Religious affection to God, expressed toward things or persons, is not straitway *Religious worship*, as may plainly appear from the definition thereof, and from what we have already intimated in the foregoing Chapter. But to return to the matter in hand.

5. By this general notion therefore of *Religious worship*, we have got now a considerable step nearer the discovery *when Idolatry is committed*; namely, *when we perform some Rite or Ceremonie*, that is to say, *some external*

external Religious action, appropriate to the signifying our acknowledgement of the Divine Eminency, before, or rather unto, that which is not truly God. Whereby before, or unto, I understand an intended direction (by our selves, or by others, or at least by interpretation of custom) of this Religious action, as to an Object we would honour thereby. For that is the only thing whereby the action becomes Idolatry. For there will be always a necessity of performing our Religious Rites before or towards something or other by way of circumstance of Place, which yet may be without the least guilt or suspicion of that crime. Wherefore it is the intended and accustomary application of the appropriate signes of the acknowledgement of the Divine Excellencies unto an Object where the Divine Excellencies are not, that is to say, to any thing that is not truly God, which is this hainous sin of Idolatry. Thus much, I say, must be; and thus much alone, without the superaddition of any thing else, does fully complete the nature of that sin.

6. For those that phanfy themselves so marvellously slye and subtil in foisting in this requisite more, viz. "That the application of these signes appropriated to the signifying of that honour we owe to God must, in Idolatry, be made to the Creature, as to God himself, that is to say, with an intent of conciliating to the adored Creature the esteem of being very God; do assuredly commit a gross piece of folly in daring to make such an assertion.

For as a woman that renders or gives up to one that is not her husband what is appropriate to her husband, to wit the use of her body, let her phanfy what mental restrictions or directions of her intention she will in the act, is questionless a downfright Adulteress: So whosoever applies the Appropriate acknowledgements of the Divine Excellency, which is Religious worship, to that which is not God, let him mince it as well as he can with mental limitations and restrictions, if he once pass this Religious worship upon this undue Object, he is thereby without all controversy a gross Idolater. And as her saying she did not do it as to her husband, will not excuse her from Adultery; so the other's saying he did not do it as to God, will not excuse him from Idolatry, which is spiritual Fornication.

7. Besides, if Idolatry be not committed but when the Creature is religiously worshipped for the most high God, or as if it were the most high God, intending the worship as to such; it will be hard to find an example of Idolatry in all Heathenism. For amongst the many Gods they worshipped, there was but One worshipped as the most High, whom the Latines styled Jupiter, the Greeks Zeus, who was accounted the Father of the Gods, and which gave occasion to Aristotle to use this expression concerning the distribution of duties and respects, ἐδὲ τὰς πατρὶ πατρὶα, καὶ δαίμον ἐδὲ τὰς Διὶ δοῦλαι, That all respects or duties are not to be paid to the Father, as all sacrifices are not made to Jupiter. But those that were not made to him (which surely were the most) were no Idolatrous worship according to this Hypothesis; nor those that were made to his Statue by them that took it not for Jupiter, nor those that were sacrificed to Jupiter himself as to the Father and

Original

Ethic. Nic.
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Original of all things; for this is a sound notion of the true God. Wherefore by this compute very few, or none in comparison, amongst the Heathens will be found *Idolaters*. Which is so incredible a Paradox, that that which infers it must needs be concluded a falshood.

8. To this you may adde, That, in that we have already proved *That Religious worship is but One*, the application of it to any Object upon any terms, saving to the only true God, is *ipso facto* Idolatry.

9. And lastly, if the appropriate signes of Religious worship might be used in the veneration of a creature, to what end is the *Divinity* of Christ so expressly set down in the Holy Writ, and so zealously contended for in all ages of the Church? For the Divine worship we give him, according to the fond assertion above mentioned, might be done unto him though he were a mere man. So exceeding manifest is it, That the application of the appropriate signes of *Divine* or *Religious* worship (for they are all one) with the intention of thereby honouring that which is not God, though they do not thereby intend to worship it as the most High God, or as the true God, is an Act of *Idolatry*.

CHAP. XI.

1. Sacrifices, Drink-offerings and Burning of Incense appropriate Signes of Religious worship, according to Grotius, as also whatever else consent of Nations has made so.
2. Also Vows, Oaths, Asking supernatural Gifts, Invoking Saints or Angels while they are invisible.
3. Or to ask of them, though visible, any natural boon at an Altar, or in a Temple consecrate to them.
4. Images erected, and dedicated in Temples, or on Altars, a Mode of Divine worship; with a prevention of an Objection.
5. Songs also and Incurvations may be so framed and circumstantiated as to become such Signes.
6. That every Idolatry is Blasphemy; as also to give the Name of God to any creature, both.
7. A general Distribution of the appropriate Signes of Religious worship.
8. A prevention of a subterfuge, from the pretence of a larger signification of Religious worship then we have given, all our future convictions depending only upon the truth of our Definition of Religious worship in that sense we have declared.

1. **W**herefore we want nothing now for the clear discovering when Idolatry is committed, but a distinct and determinate knowledge of the *appropriate Signes of Divine worship*. Which truly I think are not hard to be known. Grotius, a person not over-forward to phansy that Idolatry which is not, has expressly named three, *Sacrificium, Libamen, Suffitus*, which he calls *Venerationis Signa, quæ consensus Gentium Divini cultus esse propria voluit*, and so has not only afforded us Examples, but a Rule how to find out proper Signes of Divine worship; namely, that at least those are such that consent of Nations has made so.

And I think it seasonable here (because some do so rashly appropriate
Sacrifice

Sacrifice to that which they call *Latria*, as if this signe of Religious worship were adequately proper to God, others communicable to other Objects; to take notice, that if they mean by *Sacrifice* the Mactation of living Creatures, that manner of worship not being in use amongst Christians, it must needs enhance the nature of other Signes of Religious worship, and make them the more apparently incommunicable to any created Object, which yet were really so, though this case were not. But this only by the bye.

2. *Vows* also and *Oaths* *Gratius* acknowledges to be part of this kind of Worship, as also *The praying for the Holy Spirit, for Remission of sins, and for Eternal life*. These then, according to him, are not to be asked of an Angel, though he were visibly present. To which I will make bold to adde the Religious invocation of any Angel or Spirit absent or invisible. For as, because God is the only giver of *Eternal life*, of *Remission of sins* and of the *Holy Spirit*, he that asks so high things of any Creature, acknowledges the incommunicable Excellencies of God in that Creature so also he that invokes any invisible Angel, Saint or Spirit, does in like manner acknowledge an *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence* in this Saint or Angel, which are the incommunicable Excellencies of God.

3. Nay I adde further, That the asking of such things as are in the power of a creature to give, as suppose a fit medicine for such or such a malady, or assistance in danger upon the way in a journey; if the one be asked, suppose, of *Æsculapius* in a Temple and at an Altar consecrated to his Ghost, and the other of *Hercules* at one dedicated to his; these petitions of such feasible good offices, yea and, if you will, begged of these Ghosts or Dæmons present there and visible, (and there is the same reason in Saints and Angels) would not fail notwithstanding to be *Idolatry*; the *Consent of Nations having made the erecting and dedicating Temples and Altars for Prayers, Vows and Sacrifices* a Sign of *Divine worship*, and it was, you know, the formal worship of the most High God, the God of *Israel*, while the Temple stood, whose residence was conceived more peculiarly upon the *Cherubims*, which were concealed from the eye of the People, that they might not commit *Idolatry* with them.

4. But the Gentiles very depravedly used this circumstance of Religious worship, and made their addressees towards the open Images, or Statues of Divine residence, consecrated to that purpose, where the God was to receive their Offerings and Prayers. So that though all Nations at all times did not use this representation of the Divine residence by *Images*, yet where it was in use (which was exceeding general) it is manifest that it was part of the Divinest worship, and such as they used towards the Highest *Numen*. And seeing that this manner of Divine presence or visible Residence by *Images* was not only used in the worship of the *inferiour Damons*, but of such as were styled *Dii cælestes*, (whom assuredly they could not think exiled from Heaven to assist at these earthly Statues) it is a sign that the *Image* it self was reckoned for the visible presence of the Deity they did adore, and consequently that this representation of the presence of the Deity, whether the Deity be personally there present

present or no, is that which by *Consent of Nations* has passed into an ordinary mode of Divine worship.

Nor can the erection of *Temples*, *Altars*, or other Symbols of Religious worship, to them that are not Gods, make these cease to be such Signs or Symbols. For then, since they all have been after that manner abused, there would be no signes of Divine worship left at all. But rather on the contrary we are to conclude, that whatever things were consecrated to the worship or honour of the God of *Israel*, that to consecrate the like to that which is not God is an invading his right, and a manifest act of Idolatry.

5. *Hymns* also, and *Incurvations*, as they may be framed, will be unavoidably *Signes of Divine worship*: as namely, if this *Incurvation* be made to any particular invisible power, while he is invisible; for it is an acknowledgement of one of the incommunicable Excellencies of God, viz. his *Ubiquity*. For we may bow any where to the invisible God, because he is every where: but to bow to any particular Angel or Spirit, while he is invisible, is incongruous, because he is not every where. Therefore he that does this worship to him as congruous, does therewith, *interpretative*, acknowledge by that act an *Ubiquity* in him; and thereby becomes an *Idolater*.

Incurvation also towards an *Image* erected to any Creature (especially in a *Temple*, or on an *Altar*, yea though removed from both) were a sign of Religious worship or service by infallible definition, *Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them*: that is to say, Thou shalt not doe the service of *Incurvation*, nor any other Religious service to them. For עבודה *Service* is *Cultus religiosus*, of which *Incurvation* in such circumstances is assuredly one kind; I mean, exhibited either to an invisible power, or to its visible representation in an *Image*. Concerning the latter whereof, *Consent of Nations* has also made it an appropriate Sign of Religious worship, especially in a *Temple*, as I noted before.

And now for *Hymns*, I say, the framing of a *Song* to the praise of any created Being, suppose *Sun*, *Moon*, or *Demon*, if there be such Epithets therein as signifie the incommunicable Excellencies of God; as if one should begin, *O Sol Omnipotens*, or, *O Luna Omniscia*; this would certainly not fail to be the giving of *Divine worship* to the *Sun* and *Moon*: upon which account *Martial* seems to me not a flatterer only of *Domitian*, but an *Idolater*, in that *Hendecasyllabon*,

Edictum Domini Dei que nostri.

Wherein he writes after *Domitian's* own copy, who taught his Ministers of State this Epistolar form, *Deus & Dominus noster sic fieri jubet*. Which if it might be more tolerable in Pagan Kingdoms, where *Dii* usually amounted to no more then *Angeli* amongst us; yet in Christian Nations, where *God* is an *incommunicable name*, as the Author of the *Book of Wisdom* intimates, the calling of any man *God* cannot but be *Idolatry*, or *Blasphemy*.

6. But not the less *Idolatry* for being *Blasphemy*, sith every *Idolatry* is so. For *Idolatry*, by giving the appropriate Signs of the acknowledgement of the Divine Excellency to a vile Creature, (and every Creature is so in respect of God) does equalize that Creature unto God, and consequently

quently makes God as vile as that Creature. Which is a manifest reviling and *Blaspheming* of him, worse then the calling of a Prince by the name of the basest vermin. I say therefore, in such Countries as the name of *God* usually signifies the *true God*, and not Angels, to apply that appellation to any man, is both *Idolatry* and *Blasphemy*: as it would be to use any Gesture to him that were appropriate to Divine adoration, which made the Greeks that they would not doe reverence to the King of *Persia* in the *Persian* mode, because that was the very posture which in *Greece* they used in worshipping their Gods.

7. These are the chief, if not all, the *Signes of Divine worship* that easily occur to my mind. And if I have let any escape my recital in particular, they will easily be recalled, if not kept safe in the general Notion I have given of the *Appropriate Signes of Religious worship*, namely, That all they are such that either Consent of Nations, or the Use of particular Countries, or the natural Signification of the thing it self, or else Divine definition has made so. Of the first sort of which are *Meat-offerings*, *Drink-offerings*, *Burning of Incense*, *Erecting Altars*, *Dedicating Images*, and the like. Of the second sort is such or such a posture of Religious veneration proper to such a Country, as in that example of the *Greeks*, which was obligatory to them of that Country. And of the third, *The praying for the Holy Spirit*, for *Remission of Sins*, *Eternal life*, or for what else is out of the power of the Creature to give; also *The making of Vows and Oaths*, they implying an absolute *καρδιωγυσία* in them in whose name they are made, and not only a knowledge of the fact, but a power of punishing out of the road of Humane laws; of which power and knowledge we have no assurance in any particular Spirit, but in God only. To which you may adde *The invoking of any particular invisible powers*, while they are invisible, though in such things as they are naturally able to help us in. *Hymns* also, or any *Compellations* whatsoever made to a Creature, if the words signify the incommunicable Excellencies of God. All these of their own nature, and whatsoever are like these, are the *Appropriate Signes of Religious worship*, though the Consent of Nations did not give their suffrage; and are not due to any thing, nor lawfull to be given to any thing, but to the true God. Whence the misapplication of them to any other Object will certainly be the sin of *Idolatry*. Lastly, an example of the last sort is *Bowing to Images*, it being declared in the Decalogue a kind of service of them, according as I noted before.

8. And now, that no man may phansy to have found any creep-hole to evade the power and plainness of our Reason, by pretending that *Religious worship* is of a larger extent then what I have defined, I shall here timely advertise him, not only that I matter not what careless abuses there may be put upon a word, or what forced pullings and drawings to make proper terms to stretch for the covering and palliating unproper actions or unsound opinions; but also (and of which I would have him take special notice) that the strength of our Demonstrations will not depend upon the singleness of the signification of *Religious worship*, (which yet I have sufficiently proved to be but *one*) but upon the truth of that Definition we have given thereof, in that sense that is there professedly intended.

intended. For no man can deny but the *Religious worship* due to God alone (though he were so extravagant as to conceit some kind of *Religious worship* due to some Creatures) is truly and exactly defined in the above-said Definition. And I promise here aforehand, that my convictions of Idolatry shall be fetched, not from the supposition that *Religious worship* may have no other sense then according to which I have defined it in this Definition, but only from the truth of the Definition of that *Religious worship* which is due to God alone; to the end that there may not be the least room left for any imaginable cavil or evasion, or for any shadow or dream thereof.

CHAP. XII.

1. A brief enumeration of the parts of that full instruction we have to discern what is Idolatry. 2. That the Adoration of the Cross is Idolatry. 3. As also the Worshipping any Person of the holy Trinity by an Image or Picture. 4. That Religious worship given to Saints or Angels, though without the use of any Image or Picture, is Idolatry. 5. That the mere Invocation of any particular invisible power is also Idolatrous. 6. Certain Evasions touching the praying to Saints answered. 7. Another subterfuge answered. 8. Worshipping Saints by Images a double Idolatry. 9. That it is Idolatry to worship an Image, taking it for the Saint himself. 10. As also the Adoration of any man alive upon Earth. 11. That the worshipping of the Eucharistick Bread, taken for the real Body of Christ, is Idolatry. 12. That all the above-said acts are Idolatrous, let men pretend what they will to cover the guilt. 13. And that εἰδωλολατρεῖαι ἀνέμυλοι in S. Peter does not imply a lawfulness in any kind of Idolatry.

1. **WE** are now I think sufficiently instructed, partly by the acknowledged examples of Idolatry committed by Heathens or Jews, and partly by the knowledge of the adequate Object of Idolatry, as also of the right Definition of *Religious worship* and of the appropriate *Signes* thereof, and of the formal or essential application of those *Signes*, to discern and define infallibly what would be *Idolatry*, where-ever it was practised amongst Christians themselves, and what not.

2. As for example, To adore the Cross, or to give any *Religious worship* thereto, though there were no Image upon it, would be *Idolatry*, according to the First Instance thereof, and of such as are referable thereto, which shew that *Idolatry* may be committed without an Image. And that it is here committed, is plain, in that we suppose the appropriate *Signes of Divine worship* used in the adoration thereof. Which done to any creature, is *ipso facto* *Idolatry*.

3. Secondly, To doe *Religious worship* to the Picture or Image of any Person of the holy Trinity, or of all three, or particularly to the Image of Christ, though this *Religious worship* is intended to pass through the repre-

representation to God himself, Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, is notwithstanding *Idolatry* according to the second Instance, where worshipping the true God by an Image is proved to be such.

4. Thirdly, *The worshipping Angels, or Saints; yea the blessed Virgin herself; with Religious worship, though without an Image, is Idolatry*: And such may be a Religious Invocation of them, the asking of them such things as are proper only for God to give; as *Remission of sins, Assistance of grace, and Eternal life*; or using any *Epithets in Hymns or Songs to them*, that signify the *incommunicable Excellencies of God*; or lastly, *making Vows, and Swearing in their names*. This plainly appears from the first Instance of Idolatry, and from those kinds of appropriate signes of Divine worship that of their own nature are discoverable to be such.

5. And truly such is the *Invocation of the help of this or that Saint*, though it were not in those more conspicuous circumstances of putting up our Petitions in a Temple, or before the Image of the Saint we pray to. For the *simple Invocation of a particular invisible power* is of it self *Idolatry*, without those other circumstances; because it consequentially attributes that to that power which is only proper to the true God, I mean *Omnipresence or Ubiquity*. For no man can be assured that an invisible power is in such a particular place, but by Supposition that he is in all places at once; which is the proper Prerogative of God.

Wherefore *simple Invocation of any particular invisible power* is no such slight business as some make it, but *absolute Idolatry*, nay I think the most *fundamental part* of all the *Idolatry* committed by the Heathen; (if rationally and philosophically examined) and the mother of the rest. Or at least whatever great exception there is, or convincingly rational, against those usual Signes of Religious worship being given to these particular invisible powers; it is found here, and is alleageable against *Invocation*. For the main is, That it implies an *Omnipresence* of that invisible power they worship.

And therefore the Consecrating of a Temple and Altar and a Symbolical residence or visible representation, and Offering of Sacrifices, and the like, cannot be competible to any but the *All-present God*; whom they are always sure to find at home, if I may so speak; when they make their approaches to his House. But for other particular invisible powers, who knows whether they be at home or no; or whether pursuing, or in a journey, or asleep somewhere, as *Elias* sarcastically argues concerning *Baal*; *By I will adde, whether they be not carried away captive, and confined to some other place*: None can have any certainty of them where they are; or whether ever there where their visible and symbolical residence is erected, unless they be *Omnipresent*, and of necessity are there, because every-where: If not, we have no faith nor assurance of their Presence or Audience. But *Prayer and Invocation* supposes faith and assurance of being heard, at least in that ordinary sense; of which there being no assurance without the invisible Power invoked be *Omnipresent*, it is plain that he that *invokes* an invisible Power interpretatively implies its *Omnipresence*, and consequently, if it be a particular Power and finite, commits *Idolatry* thereby.

6. Nor can the demonstrativeness of this Reason be eluded or evaded by those usuall subterfuges of *the Saints seeing and knowing all things by particular revelation from God*, or by *the exalted peculiarity of their condition in that separate glorified state they are in*. For those that talk at this rate rant it, and speak unintelligible riddles, without all ground or probability of Reason or warrant of Scripture; they being mere after-figments and precarious suppositions to excuse the madness and extravagancy of their Idolatrous actions.

For as for the latter surmise, it is plainly a dream, to think the blessed Virgin, suppose, merely by virtue of her glorified and separate condition from this terrestrial body, can hear from Heaven at such a vast distance the devout whispers or suspirations of her affectionate Supplicants, or see through the earth their humble prostrations. For she is called upon by the inhabitants of this Globe in all postures or distances of Habitation, even by those that are *Antipodes* one to another: where if she assist the one, she must be at least the Earth's Diameter distant from the other, through which distance neither her sight nor hearing can ever penetrate.

And for the former Hypothesis, how childish and ridiculous is it! they pretending that they supplicate the Saints to speak to God in their behalf, whenas the Saints cannot speak to God till he tell them their errand first, who has received the message from the Supplicant already, but must impart it to the Saints to say it over to him again; which shews the incongruity of making any addressee to them, and (considering how perfectly appeasable and propitious, and how freely accessible God is through the only name and mediation of *Jesus Christ*) is such an useless patch and bungle in Divinity, that it cannot seem credible to any man of common sense: and therefore there is no such special revelation to the Saints of our compellation of them in our Prayers, and consequently the *Invocation* of them (which is proper to God, by reason of his *Omniscious Ubiquity*) being thus misplaced upon these particular invisible powers, must be interpretatively an act of *Idolatry*, there being done such an act of worship to them as implies in the Object such an Excellency as is found only in God.

7. Nor will their profession of those diminishing apprehensions concerning Saints in other respects (as, That they are not the true God, but only glorified Creatures, and That they are Intercessours inferior to Christ, and the like) excuse them from *Idolatry*: For the acknowledgement of any one Divine Excellency and Peculiarity of the Godhead in that which is a mere Creature, is undoubtedly *Idolatry*; as the betraying any one Castle to the enemy is Treason against a Prince. And the Pagans were esteemed as Idolaters in worshipping *Mercury* and the whole order of the *Medioxymous* or *internuntial Deities* or *Demons*, for all their acknowledging them inferior to the Supreme God. So that I cannot see but that *the mere Invocation of Saints or Angels is a palpable, nay a fundamental, piece of Idolatry*, and in reference to which all the pomp and furniture of Idolatry was superstructed; I mean the building of their Temples, erecting Altars and Images, Incensing, and Sacrificing, and the rest. For all end in, or are circumstances of *Invocation*,

cation, upon faith and assurance to be heard, which cannot be rationally placed in any invisible power, unless it be *Omnipresent*; which this *Invocation* does naturally and necessarily implit; else there will be no sense of the action, but it will be very incongruous and ridiculous. For other suppositions are arbitrary, uncertain, nay incredible firmities touching an invisible power, and upon which there can be no faith nor assurance of being heard.

8. Fourthly, And as this worship of *Invocation* to either Saint or Angel, *without the use of an Image*, is thus plainly *Idolatry*; so the *invoking* them, or any other way of worshipping them *with an Image*, must be a double piece of *Idolatry*; and is referable to the *third* Mode thereof.

9. Fifthly, The worshipping of the Image, suppose of the blessed Virgin or of any other Saint, upon a mistake that it is the very Virgin herself or this or that Saint, is also *Idolatry*, and to be referred to the *fourth* Instance thereof.

10. Sixthly, To worship any man yet living with Religious worship, whether in gesture, compellation, appellation, or any thing else that is an appropriate Sign of the incommunicable Excellencies of God, is also *Idolatry*, and is to be referred to the *first* Instance.

11. Seventhly and lastly, To worship the *Consecrated Bread in the Eucharist*, though upon full persuasion that it is *transubstantiated* into the Body of Christ, and so Hypostatically united with the Divinity, is, notwithstanding this opinion conceived of it, a real act of *Idolatry*, and is evidently referable to the last Instance.

12. All these acts or what other soever of the same nature that can be found, though amongst Christians, and upon the pretence of worshipping God and Christ, are assuredly acts of *Idolatry*, according to the undeniable Notion and Definition thereof, which is, *The worshipping that which is not God by the appropriate Signs of Religious worship, such as either use or the nature of the thing it self has made the proper Modes of our acknowledgement of the Divine Excellencies*.

13. And now that I have proved such acts as these *Idolatrous*, I need not bestow any new pains to prove them *unlawfully*; because all *Idolatry* is so according to the vote and sense of Scripture and of all men. For to goe about to infer that some kind of *Idolatry* is lawfully because * *Peter* mentions *Εἰδωλολατρεῖαι καὶ δῆμιλοι*, is as weak and foolish, as if from the mentioning of *Impious blasphemies* against God, one should infer that the party that spake so supposed that some blasphemies against God were not *Impious*. Wherefore it is plain that *καὶ δῆμιλοι* is added not by way of distinction, but of aggravation or description; as when we say *Alba nix*, or *Corvus niger*, which are not intended in common speech as notes of distinction of *Grows* or of the *Snow* into *white* and *black*, but as Epithets denoting their nature. The practice therefore of such actions as we have enumerated, if they be introduced into the Christian Church, will prove one Branch of *Antichristianism*, and a chief one, too; and their doctrines that averre the warrantableness of them must be false and irrational.

* 1 EP. 4. 3.

CHAP. XIII.

1. That the professing one only true God does not necessarily quit a People from the guilt or capacity of being Idolaters.
2. That to exhibit such Modes of worship as are proper to the true God to a Creature, though we take it for a Creature, is Idolatry.
3. That the Jews were Idolaters, though they professed the only true God.
4. That the belief of the Eucharistick Bread being the real Body of Christ does not excuse the adorer thereof from Idolatry.
5. The case of the Heathen that worshipped the Sun, and this of the Bread-worshippers, compared.
6. A solution of a Sophism the Author once put upon himself in excuse of this Bread-worship.
7. That their not thinking the Bread to be in the Eucharist does not excuse the worshippers of the Host from Idolatry.

1. **H**AVING thus evidenced the Falseness of the *Mystery of Inquiry* in this first point; according to my professed method, I shall proceed to the *Fraud*, which (as I have already intimated) includes the fallacious pretences and excuses, together with the *Self-endeavour* of the drivers on of this impious Mystery.

And truly the pretences and shelters under which they would shroud themselves are very slender and scant, but their *Self-ends* may be gross and palpable. As methinks that would be a very poor plea for the Christians, namely, that they, forsooth, cannot possibly be Idolaters, because they apertly and declaredly profess that there is only one true God, of a nature infinitely excellent above any Creature, and that therefore if they were Idolaters they should contradict themselves: Wherefore no professors of Christianity, though they did Religious worship to *Saints*, to *Angels*, to *Images*, to *Crosses*, to a piece of consecrated *Bread*, could be Idolaters, especially if they shamelessly stand out with it, and own that they are not so.

But the insufficiency of this excuse is too-too apparent, if we consider how easy and ordinary a thing it is for men to contradict the profession of their own faith. For how many are there; even of those that do truly believe *there is a life to come*, that do not live as if there were any such thing, and so contradict their belief by their actions? How many are there that professing a particular Providence of God and faith therein, yet in time of streights do not depend thereon, but divert to some unlawful practice, or do some wicked action to relieve themselves in distress, or secure themselves from danger? How many that with zealously declaim against Cruelty and Injustice, as things abhorred of God and man, and yet are themselves notoriously Unjust and Cruel in the judgement of all the disinterested, though they themselves will make a more favourable construction of their own actions, and will stand it out as stoutly for their justification, as these professors of Christianity that they are no Idolaters?

It

It may so fare therefore, that, as the Apostle speaks to *Vine*, men may profess to know God, but in their works deny him. They may say there is one only true God, yet do that Homage which is due to him alone unto this or that Creature, without saying or intending that this Creature should be taken for the true God, or that they do that Religious worship to it as to the true God. Which is such a piece of Idolatry as never was amongst the Heathens themselves, nor can explicitly fall into the mind of a man; no more then to believe contradictions while he thinks them so, or conscientiously to goe against the dictates of his own conscience while he thinks those dictates to be true. So plain is it, that no people can conscientiously and devotionally give that worship which they think due to God alone, unto that which they think is not the true God.

2. But out of inadvertency, ill education, or accustomed Superstition, it is not impossible but that, not knowing or not taking notice that such or such Ceremonies or Modes of worship are properly due to the only true God, they may use them in honour to that which is but a Creature, or the Image of a Creature, be it Saint or Angel; nor can the remembering they are Gods Creatures in this case secure a man from Idolatry. For the mistake in the nature of the worship they perform to them does lapse them into Idolatry; notwithstanding they conceive of the Object as of a Creature. And Ignorance can be no excuse, where there is opportunity of being better informed. Nay *Incest* and *Adultery* must be accounted and called by us *Adultery* and *Incest*, though practised in such countries as allow thereof, and we must say they are a more unclean people then our selves.

3. To which you may adde, That the Church of the *Jews* were sometimes *Idolaters*, and so declared by the Prophets of God, though they had not cast away the knowledge nor acknowledgment of their *Jehovah*, the only true God. Why may not therefore *Christians* be *Idolaters*, though they still profess they worship the only true God, and *Jesus Christ* whom he hath sent, the very same God once incarnate of the Virgin *Mary*, and so living amongst men upon Earth.

4. And particularly concerning the *Adoring of the Bread in the Eucharist* upon a belief that it is the very Body of Christ, a Christian could nor defend himself from the imputation of Idolatry, neither by the general pleasure, nor by the proper plea to this case, namely, That he that thus adores it, does verily believe it to be the Body of Christ or his corporeal presence; I say, he cannot clear himself from being guilty of real Idolatry. For his Ignorance is not his excuse, no more then before.

For the sense of his Excuse is only this; That he gives this Divine worship to the seeming Bread, because he verily believes it to be God, and therefore a due Object of this worship; and that he gives no more worship then he thinks is due to the Object. If there be any sense in the Reason and Faculties of a man, this is the sense of their Plea; which if inbred and just, we do very unjustly to accuse any Nations or persons in the world of committing Idolatry, that were serious in the action. For can they devoutly or seriously doing it, conceive at the same time they doe their divine worship to an undue Object, and that that Object is

not capable of as much Religious worship as they do to it?

5. There was infinitely more reason that the Pagans should take the *sun* to be that true and Eternal God that made and governs all things, as he is professed to be in the fragments of their Liturgies, then that any Christian should imagine a piece of *consecrated Bread* to be so. And I question not but that the ancient Heathen did as firmly believe the *sun* to be God, as any Christian can believe the *Eucharistick Bread* to be the Body of Christ: But yet notwithstanding I think it never came into any Christian mans mind to doubt but that the worshippers of the *sun* were Idolaters. How then is it possible but that a *Bread-worshipping* Christian upon the same terms must be an Idolater too, there being nothing intrinsecal that can excuse the one but it will excuse the other also?

And as for the mitigation of the fault of either side from any exteriour circumstances, I briefly adde, That the glorious lustre of the *sun*, his comfortable warmth, his notable effects, and vast influence upon the world, was a far stronger inducement and more unavoidable to make the Pagans think him to be God, then *Hoc est corpus meum*, or any gloss thereon by the Fathers of the Church, could justly be, to make any Christian believe that the *Eucharistick Bread* is the real Body of *Jesus* Christ. Besides that as *Murther* and *Adultery* may have several degrees of aggravation, the fact being still the same; so let the Circumstances be more or less aggravable, as much as men may imagine them, yet the act we speak of is certainly *Idolatry*.

6. I must confess time was when I marvellously pleased my self in phansying I had found out so clear an evidence, as I then thought, to prove that the adoring of the Host, as it is called, was not Idolatry in them that believed that it was the very Body of Christ. For I thought it as pardonable a mistake as I my self once committed, when I was a boy, in asking a waggish cosin of mine blessing. For in the dusk of the evening, he having by chance placed himself in the Chair where my Father used ordinarily to sit, I passing by to goe up to bed, out of mistake begged, according to the custome of children, his benediction, thinking it was my Father; but he rewarding my blind devotion with a ludicrous blessing and loud laughter, I presently found my error. (I know not how far I have transgressed the Laws of *decorum* in telling this trivial story of my self; but I hope the Reader will pardon this *εὐαὐλολογία*, it being so serviceable for my present purpose.)

Now the Charitable use I sometime made of this mistake of mine was this; That as I had not the least intention of begging a blessing or doing any act of a filial duty to that unfit person that then sat in the Chair, but to my Father only; and that therefore though a stranger had occupied the place, yet that duty was directed, intended, and indeed done to him alone, though he was not there to receive it: So I charitably concluded (and the imposing so upon my self was a great ease to my mind, being exceeding loath to find any more miscarriages in the world, in the Christian world especially, then needs must) that if a man did Divine Adoration to the *Host*, he being fully persuaded it was the Body of Christ, that Adoration did no more pass to the Host then my asking blessing did to him I never intended

intended it for; but that as this latter was entirely directed to my Father, so the former did entirely pass to the person of Christ.

This imposition upon my self was a great ease and pleasure to the charitableness of my nature, so long as I thought more carelessly upon the matter. But after making it my business to enquire more accurately into these things, I found that saying of *Solomon* over-true, That *he that encreaseth wisdom, encreaseth sorrow*. Nor can I apologize for this mistake on this sort, but I must also thereby excuse all the Idolaters in the World that were serious in their Idolatry. For undoubtedly they always took themselves to have a due Object of their worship; and what is *Idolatry* but the not having a due Object thereof? Wherefore if thinking we have will excuse us from Idolatry, no devout and serious Idolater was ever guilty of the sin; which is an enormous contradiction.

Besides, there is a great difference betwixt a sudden surprisal inevitable for one single action, and a constant repetition of the same mistakes; and still greater, if we consider what a loud warning there has been given in these latter ages against this so palpable error of *Transsubstantiation*; men having strained their voices, and called to them not only *ad ravim usque*, but till they have spit blood, and spilt their own lives by freely and faithfully testifying against that Idolatrous falsehood. And therefore where men either take up or persist in this gross error & in the ill effect thereof, it must be now unexcusable Idolatry in the judgment of all men that believe the *Eucharistick Bread* not to be the Body of Christ; of which Truth there is as great a certainty as of any one thing in the world.

7. Nor, lastly, would that Evasion serve their turn, if they should contend that they cannot be said to adore the *Bread*, because they do not think it there. For the case is much what the same with the former, and needs no new answer. But I demand, Whether is it less Idolatry to adore the Accidents of the Bread, which they acknowledge to be there, or the Bread it self? And if the Body of Christ be not there under these Accidents, their act of Adoration falls upon the visible Accidents of Bread: which if they be of less nobleness than the Bread it self, their Idolatry is the greater. Besides, the Heathen who adored the *Sun*, did not think that Being which is really the *Sun* to be there; (for the *Sun* is nothing else but an Inanimate and unintelligent mass of flammeous matter) but thought it the glorious Godhead it self, which they worshipp'd as an Intellectual Power that created and govern'd all things, as I have already intimated; and yet no man will say that this excused them from Idolatry in worshipping the *Sun*. Where then is their Excuse that pretend they are guiltless of that *Artolatria* they are fallen into, because, forsooth, they think the *Bread* is not there, that is to say, that that which they worship there is not *Bread*? For the Pagans did not take the *Sun*, in our sense and notion of him, which is the true sense, to be there; though the external species of the *Sun* seems alike to both us and them, as the external species of the *Bread* seems alike to both the *Artolatra* and his accuser.

CHAP. XIV.

1. The fondness of distinguishing betwixt an Idol and an Image, when they are both made Objects of Religious worship.
2. That nothing but what is essentially and infinitely Excellent is a due Object thereof.
3. That the absence of the Saints from their Images does not excuse the Idolatry.
4. The unlikeliness that there is any true Image of Christ, if it were lawfull to worship it.
5. But that it is unlawfull to worship it, though there were.
6. That the whole Decalogue is moral.
7. That the use of Images for Memory and Devotion was also the Plea of the Heathen.
8. That External Objects in Divine worship hinder the perfection thereof.
- 9, 10. Other material allegations against the pretended use of Images in Churches.
11. That there are many other ways of exciting Devotion in the people, infinitely surpassing this of Images.

1. **T**Hat also would be but a lame excuse for the worshipping of the Images of Saints, namely, That they are not Idols, but the Images of the holy Saints of God and Christ; but that an Idol is the Image of some Heathen Deity, such as *Bacchus*, *Venus*, *Apollo* and the rest, which were supposed to reside in the Idols themselves, whereas the Saints are with Christ in Heaven. As if any Image whatsoever to which Religious worship is given, were not an Idol. For there is no difference betwixt such an Image and an Idol, but that the one is a Greek word, the other Latin; they both signifying the likeness of something or other. And the making of such is but an harmless piece of art: but when-ever such likenesses or similitudes of things or persons receive Divine honour or Religious worship, they do *ipso facto* become Idols in the worst sense.

Nor is there any sufficient reason why the Image of *Bacchus* or *Ceres*, being worshipped Religiously, should become an Idol, and the Image of *Peter* or *Paul* should not; or that the Invocation of the one should be Idolatry, and of the other not. For the worshipping of the true God by an Idol is Idolatry; wherefore the worshipping that which is not God by an Idol is double Idolatry. And this is the case as well in worshipping the Image of *Paul* or *Peter*, as of *Bacchus* or *Apollo*.

2. For even *Bacchus* and *Apollo* and *Ceres* and the rest were Benefactors to mankind in the gratifications of the Animal life, as I have elsewhere noted at large. But they were not infinite Benefactors. *Mars*, its likely, was a valiant Warriour when he lived on earth, but he is not *Jehovah Zebaoth*, God Omnipotent; and *Apollo* was a Wise and skilfull man, but not Omniscent. Wherefore they having not these Divine Excellencies in them infinitely and essentially, they are incapable of Divine honour.

Now there is the same reason for our Benefactors in Spiritual and Divine matters, as in those that are Animal and Natural: For the ground of

of the unlawfulness of our doing *Religious worship* to *Mars* or *Apollo*, is not that they were Benefactors only in those things that concern the *Animal* life, but that they were not the Infinite and Essential Authors and Originalls of those perfections : And therefore *S. Peter*, *S. Paul*, and *S. John*, yea the blessed Virgin herself, though they were excellent patterns, and powerfull persuaders to the love of God and all the duties and accomplishments of the *Divine life*, and were singularly well accomplished therein themselves ; yet they being not infinitely and essentially good and holy, they are as utterly incapable of *Religious worship* (which in this case would become *Idolatry*.) as any of the other. And they that would commit this Spiritual fornication with them because they are so holy and so good, would be as ridiculously impious, in my apprehension, as those Sectaries are that are reported to make nothing of carnal Adultery or Fornication with an holy Brother or Sister, but with the prophane and ungodly they will refrain themselves from that liberty.

3. Nor can the supposition, *That the Souls of the Saints are not in the Images of the Saints, as the Pagan Demons were supposed to be in their Idols*, have the least shew of a solid excuse : For the presence of the Saints would make the act of worship seem more excusable, they being thereby more capable of such devout addresses and compellations. But these subterfuges are so flight that they are not worth the insisting upon.

4. The Apologie for *worshipping the Image of Christ* may be more plausible, in that he was truly God, and yet of a visible shape and figure. This indeed would be no frivolous plea for the lawfulness of making his Picture or *Effigies*, but will not reach the warranting us to worship it.

Besides, who knows what was the right feature of our Saviour ? And then how ridiculous and foolish is that affection and pleasure in contemplating the Picture which we take for his, when in all likelihood it is neither like him ; nor any one else ? For it is not probable that the sad and aggrieved Spirit of our Saviour and his serious followers had so little to doe, as to concern themselves in having his Picture drawn, who was a * *man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*. But being that the Divinity was Hypostatically united with Christ's Humanity only, and that his visible Person was of a certain shape and figure peculiar and individual, and that it is pretended from this Union only that the right of worshipping his Image does arise ; if the Image be not the Image of Christ, (as it happens often, they say, that the *Virgin's* Image is not hers, but of the fairest, though not always the chastest, of the City.) but the Image of some body else, or an Image made at random, and it may be of no body that ever was, the ground of this warrant for the worship of this Image will fail, so that none can be assured but that he committeth Idolatry.

5. And besides, though it were the true Image of the Humane feature of Christ, and this the pretended ground of the lawfulness of the worshipping it ; we forget in the mean time that Christ himself is not a due Object of Divine worship but as he is *Deus deus*, not a mere Man, but God also. But what Painter or Statuary can describe or carve out his Divinity ? or what union is there betwixt that and his Statue or Picture ?

* *Esay 53.*

Picture? And lastly, what licence have we to break the commandment of God, who expressly forbids us the worshipping of the Image or Similitude of any thing; nay the very making of an Image or Similitude for Religious worship? For the very Title of the First Table, which is concerning the Honour of God and his worship, shews plainly that this is the sense thereof.

6. And for my part, I do not question but that the *whole Decalogue is Moral*, and that we are as precisely tied from *Image-worship* as from *Adultery* it self. For why should *Moses* mixe duties of such different natures in one short Decalogue? especially he copiously delivering his positive *Laws*, whether *Ceremonial* or *Political*, in other places. For the forbidding simply the making an Image is no precept at all, but only the prohibition of making an *Idol* thereof; and therefore those words, *Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them*, are added exegetically for the avoiding all mistake, and plainly intimate that *Idolatry* is there forbid, and not simply the making of Images or Pictures; or Images are forbid to be made in relation to Idolatrous worship, as I intimated before from the nature of the Title of the First Table, which concerns Religion or our duty to God.

Moreover, why were these *Ten Commandments* more especially said to be *writ by God's own finger on those Tables of stone*, but that it was typically to indigitate to us, that it was that Law which is also writ in our hearts by the finger of God, durably and permanently; and that if every mans mind were wiped and cleansed from that dirt and filth that lies on it, those Eternal Characters of indispensable Morality and Reason would conspicuously and legibly appear there, and close with the Decalogue as a most just and righteous Law? We know that our Saviour has in a very special manner honoured the *Decalogue*, by his pointing to it as the way to eternal life. And the general consent of the learned of old hath made it an abridgment of the *Moral Law*: Nor can any one that duely considers the nature of it but acknowledge it an everlasting Law of God to his Church, even in the literal sense thereof. But in the behalf of Christianity (which requires a more Spiritual worship then ordinary) so to Spiritualize the *Decalogue* as to leave men free to *Image-worship*, seems to me a spiritualizing it into gross Carnality, and to be both as impious and ridiculous, as the spiritualizing the Commandment against Adultery into an holy licentiousness of lying with their neighbour's wife without sin or shame; which they say is accounted an high pitch of Christian liberty and perfection with some Sectaries.

7. The last excuse that occurs to my mind in the behalf of the Religious use of *Images* in Churches is, *That these are helps for Memory and Devotion*, the mind of the vulgar being so gross and flagging, and so estranged from all sense and conceit of the Deity and Religion, that it must be fetched up by these palpable and visible engines, on which they can lay hold, and so bear up their Devotion and affection toward divine things by the helpfull artifice of these exteriour props. But this plea is in common with the Heathens and lapsed Christians: And that Apologie must needs look fallaciously, that will serve as well a confessedly-bad cause as a pretended good one.

Maximus

Maximus Tyrus of old defended the use of *Statues* in Religious worship after this sort, alledging that they were only σημεία τῆς πρὸς τὸ θεῖον τιμῆς, καὶ ὡς περ χειραγωγία πρὸς τὴν οὐδὴν πρὸς ἀνάμνησιν, only signs of the honour we doe to the Deity, and a manuductive method to the re-minding us thereof. But for those (saith he) whose memory is more firm, and the sight of their Mind more directly penetrative into the Divine presence, these have not the need of such helps: But he pretends they are very few.

Much to this purpose you may reade in this Sophist, who having taken notice of the several ways of *Idolatries*, as we must call them, in several countries, and how all the while there may be θεῖον εἰς γνώμην, God in their Heart, though their affection be stirred up to him by some external representation, as that of *Lovers* is to their absent friends by their Pictures or any token else that relates to them; he at last fairly and plausibly concludes his Dissertation with this caution or admonition; Εἰ δ' Ἐμνας μὲν ἐπεγείρει πρὸς τὴν μνήμην τῷ θεῷ ἡ Φειδῖα τέχνη, Αἰγυπτίαι δὲ ἡ πρὸς τὴν ζῶαν τιμὴν, καὶ ποταμοὶ ἄλλοι, καὶ πῦρ ἄλλοι, ἡ νεμεσὴ τῆς διαφορίας, ἴσσαν μόνον, ἐξάπτωσαν μόνον, μνημονεύωσαν μόνον. That is to say, If an exquisitely-wrought Statue put the Greeks in mind of God, some holy Animal the Egyptians, a River others, and Fire others; I am not offended at the diversity; onely let them understand, onely let them love, onely let them remember, θεῖον εἰς γνώμην ἴσσαν μόνον, onely let God be in their mind.

8. But truly in my apprehension, to fix a mans sight upon either *River*, *Cow*, or *Statue*, so as to take notice he does so, (and if he does not take notice of it, to what purpose does he look on it?) is the next way to exclude God out of his mind: For who can think of two things at once? Wherefore those Religious Symbols which will least of all take up our animadversion, or fix it to themselves, but leave it free to God, are the fittest for the more perfect worshipping of him; and (what is yet closer to our purpose) the having no Object in our worship but what is truly God, will be the safest way to lodge our Mind with him, and to think more truly, comprehensively and devoutly of him, then we can possibly while we pretend to see him or conceive him in any Statue or Picture whatsoever. For the apprehension of his infinite Wisdom, Goodness and Power, his infinite Mercy, Justice and Truth, and the effects of these, the vastness of his Providence, the sense also of his Ubiquity or Omnipresence, and that in him we live, and move, and have our Being, is a more lively representation of the Deity then the exquisitest art or costliest materialls can afford.

But if any seek an external Image of God that falls under the Senses; behold the best and fairest is this *All* that we see: which yet is but a small matter so far as our sight can discern. What a pitifull representation then must any particular thing be, whether Natural or Artificial, for the setting out the Divine Majesty, and how unfit to pretend to become an Object, in any sense, of Religious worship? How far short must it fall of the inward representation in the Vertuous Mind, whenas that in the Mind does so hugely exceed the largest and fairest prospect the

Eye can take of this visible Universe? Wherefore whatever is interposed betwixt God and us by way of Object in our worshipping him, is not an help, but an hinderance, to the perfection of that Worship.

9. And if we may compare small things with great, (as the Analogie does in some sort hold) the Character of the Vertuous life of any Saint is a better and more usefull Image of the Saint, and will conciliate a greater love and honour of him, then the seeing of his Picture or Statue. For no figure, posture, nor colours, can decypher or set out *Sincerity*. For every artificial Feature, look it never so well and devoutly, is but the livelier picture of *Hypocrisie*, because it is not what it would seem to be. Not to repeat my former allegation, that it is not credible that any of the afflicted primitive Christians spent their time so Idlely, as to sit to have their Pictures drawn, much less the blessed Virgin or holy Apostles of Christ. Which mistake makes *Religious worship* done to their Images ridiculous, as well as Idolatrous. For it is a sign that none of these Images are true, in that they all pretend to be so; as if all the Saints of God had been great admirers of their own earthly shadows, when there is no likelihood that any of them were. So entirely and universally contemptible and reproveable is *Image-worship* in Christianity. But to return.

10. So far therefore (as touching the *Deity*) is this *Imagery* in Churches from erecting a mans mind to the remembrance of God, and a due and worthy sense and knowledge of him, that it sinks it lower, and fixes it upon mean and trivial objects; nay indeed, out of inadvertence and an heavy proneness to sensible matters, depresses it, plunges and immerses it into gross Idolatries: and (as touching the *Saints*) instead of warming it into an affectionate admiration of their virtues, makes it fall into such sins as were most zealously avoided and abominated by them.

11. To all which you may lastly adde, That this plea is still more weakened in the case of Christians, there being sufficient Props and Engines, nay Screws and Pulleys, if you will, to raise mens Love and Devotion in that *palpable and sensible Commemoration of the Death of Christ*, the Son of God and Saviour of the world. *God is Love, and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God in him.* What better sense, apprehension, or representation of God can there therefore be, then that of an infinite Love? And what better means to raise us to any proportionable pitch of the sense of this Love, then the *celebration of the Passion of Christ*, who poured out his own most precious blood for the redemption of the world?

Besides, the coming to an appointed place of publick worship at solemn times, the approaching and continuing there with reverence, the putting up plain and easily-intelligible prayers to God, the hearing of the Scriptures with easy and plain Expositions of them; certainly such duties and performances as these will bear men up more firmly by far into a sense of the *Deity*, then the viewing any Imagery whatsoever. And if you adde the singing of Hymns or Psalms, whether with the Organ or without, provided it be done well and tunably, it will excite the Devotion of the people much more powerfully, and with a more determinate sense and greater edification,

edification, then the Dumb shews of *Pictures* and *Images*, which can speak nothing, when abused to Idolatry, but the folly and unfaithfulness of their Setters up. Also domestick reading to people, or teaching them to reade, will make the presence needles of these silent Masters.

What want is there therefore of either *Images* or *Idolatry* for either improving our Knowledge or exciting our Devotion, or for the preventing our relapse into an utter oblivion of God and the sense of Divine things?

CHAP. XV.

1. *That the general End of this impious and useles Idolatry and Image-worship is the Profit of the Priest.*
2. *Several artifices of making these Images gainfull to them.*
3. *The gainfulness of Transubstantiation the cause of the admitting it to the making up the full Statute of Antichristianism.*
4. *What a wonderfull and powerfull intercessour the Priest seems upon this pretension.*
5. *Various ways of the improving this gainfull persuasion.*
6. *The unspeakable honour that seems to accrue to the Priest from this stupendious miracle.*
7. *That it seems to give him a just claim to exemption from Civil jurisdiction, and saves him the labour of endeavouring after Truth and Sanctity.*
8. *That their Pretences for Idolatry though they be weak, yet their Self-ends therein are palpable.*

1. **W**herefore their Pretences for Idolatry and Image-worship being but mere Sophistry, let us consider what Self-endedness may keep up such unworthy practices. And truly the plot cannot lie so deep but every one may easily see it that is not wilfully blind. For there may be driven the same trade that was in *Feremie's* time by the Idolatrous Priests of the ancient *Babylon*, such as he notes in his Epistle, * *As for the things that are sacrificed unto Idols, their Priests sell and mispend in like manner their wives lay up part thereof in salt.* * *And not far after, * The Priests also take of their garments, and cloath their wives and children.* In brief therefore, The End of Image-worship may be the enriching of the Priest, and all the abovesaid pretences and excuses forged and framed merely to keep up that gain. For unless there were some such Mystery of Profit underneath, it were a wonder that the Christian Priesthood should retain any such custom, that is so palpably contradictory to the Word of God, and so expressly and particularly against the Second Commandment, and so great an offense to sober and conscientious Christians, and lastly so huge a rock of scandal to both *Jew* and *Turk*.

* Verſ. 19.

* Verſ. 33.

2. It is therefore not hard to imagine how they having erected the Statue of this or that Saint, of the Virgin *Mary*, *S. James*, *S. Peter*, or the like, handsomely adorning them, and setting them out in a competent liveliness of personal shape, that they may teach the people (who are too prone to these Spiritual fornications, especially being animated and em-

boldened by the counsel or example of their lenocinant Leaders) not only to open their mouths to them in prayer, but their hands also in various offerings; having imbued their rude minds with a superstitious fear of the Saints displeasure, if they approach empty-fisted; and, it may be, by some artifices make the Images to seem to frown or smile upon them, according to the scantness or largeness of their gifts; or at least provoke the offerers emulations by hanging up in view what has been given to the Image, with the names of the devouter and more liberal Clients.

The giving out also that this or that Saint has a special power for doing such or such miracles, for healing such or such diseases, for aiding in such or such streights or exigencies, were endow'd with such or such a measure of Pardons or Indulgences; how strongly would these surmises attract the devotions of the simple, even to the making Vows to them in Danger, and the going on Pilgrimages to their Temples or Chappells: where being brought into the visible presence, as it were, of the Saint himself, represented by his well-adorned Statue or Image, (either out of a conceit of some help done to them already, or in expectation of some future succour) they cannot for shame but offer at least proportionably to their ability, not doubting but the more liberal Clients of so good and powerfull a Patron shall not fail one way or other to receive at least a full penny-worth for a penny.

But they do not consider in the mean time, that the imitation of any peculiar Vertue in any of those Saints would oblige them more (*ἢ τῆς αἰδνῆς*, if they have any knowledge of humane affairs) to doe all the good they can, then if a man should lay down all the wealth he has at the feet of one of their Statues; and that an hearty prayer directed to God through Christ would gain more favour from them, then if it had been directed to themselves. As any good Christian would sooner relieve a poor man whom by chance he found earnestly breathing out his wants to God in secret, then if he had begged relief of himself.

3. We see plainly therefore what a *Gainfull* trade may be driven in the maintaining of the *Invocation of Saints and of Image-worship*. And if some such like prop did not uphold that Mysterious conceit of *Transsubstantiation* and the *Idolatry* thereon depending, assuredly so huge an Extravagancy, and so repugnant to Scripture, and contrary to all Sense and Reason, would not have the possibility of being any part of that *Idea of Antichristianism* which I am a-describing: For it could never get into the Church of Christ upon its own score, but as it served some other end or designe; at least it could not be retained there, when once seriously sifted, unless it were found very advantageous to the maintainers thereof.

4. What *Self-ends* therefore, will you say, can be served by the pretence of the power of doing so stupendious a miracle, as the *changing the Bread in the Eucharist into the very Body or Corporeal presence of Christ*? Why certainly very great ones, and mightily advantageous to the Priest. For he that is supposed to have the power by pronouncing *four or five words to make Christ Jesus*, who is God blessed for ever, *personally and corporeally present*, cannot be well imagined to be streightened so in the effect

effect of his intention, but that, Christ's personal presence being thus procured, he will bring to pass those very designs the Priest intended in procuring it. As very few doubt but that he that can raise a Spirit to be as it were Θεός ἀπὸ μυχῶν in an hard streight, can procure of the Spirit to assist to that end for which he was raised.

Wherefore supposing the Priest has power to bring this real Θεός ἀπὸ μυχῶν down into Corporeal presence by such a divine charm, as they would make it; who can suspect but that Christ being *bodily* there, he will assist, favour and effect any allowable end for which the Priest by virtue of the words of Consecration brought him thither? I say, Christ being thus really and Corporeally there, (Body, Soul, and Divinity) and being thus visibly and personally offered up by the hands of the Priest, in the opinion of the people, for the procurement of this or that favour of God; they cannot at all doubt but that he, having such a pledge in his hand, will not fail of obtaining any thing, that is not plainly sinfull, at the hands of God. For if he has thus palpably given him his own Son, how can he with-hold any thing from him? Certainly, they that believe the Priest in the first, cannot easily misbelieve him in the second.

5. Wherefore the Priest might safely pretend that by virtue of this offering up Christ really and personally in the *Masse*, and of his direction of the intent of his own action therein, this Sacrifice will be available for both the living and the dead, for the sick and for the sound, for both man and beast; that he can thereby deliver Souls out of Purgatory, free men from the plague, heal cattel, drive away fevers, or prevent the tooth-ach, recover lost goods, cure the soreness of the eyes, give victory against a mans enemies, procure a good husband or wife, and what not?

Wherefore the Sacrificer being conceived to be invested with so mighty a power; if he will but be so free and accessible, as to be persuaded upon occasions to make use of it either for love or money, may he not certainly have his choice? Whence it is plain, that if the Priesthood would enrich themselves upon this account, it is entirely in their power; and that they would receive money for such holy performances and so pious uses, is not unimaginable. And therefore it is no hard stroke in this Picture I draw of *Antichristianism*, to suppose that the opinion of *Transsubstantiation* may be stoutly and tenaciously held up, for the upholding and increasing the *Wealth* of an Antichristian Priesthood. For if the opinion be false, as most certainly it is, it is the mother of *Idolatry*; and therefore the Founders or Abettors thereof may be justly termed *Antichristian*, especially it being supposed that it is maintained for the love of filthy lucre.

6. But it may not be *Wealth* only that is the End and Design of this monstrous doctrine, but the *exaltation of their persons into a greater esteem and honour than can well be humane*.

For to transform a piece of Bread into the real Person of Christ, is little less then to create our Creator. And if the blessed Virgin, for being the Mother of God, does in their judgement deserve what they call *εὐσεβεία*, a kind of worship little inferior to Divine honour, such as we give to God himself; what respect must they think themselves worthy

of that phansy themselves the *Creators* of that very God of which the Virgin *Mary* is said to be the Mother :

Certainly it would puzzle men to conceive a way of expression of sufficient honour and respect for such a wonder-working Priesthood, who in this one miracle, which yet is ordinarily and easily done by them, (though our Saviour was fain to groan for it when he raised *Lazarus* from the dead) who, I say, in this one miracle, of changing the dead element of Bread into the living Body and Person of Christ, do out-doe all the Miracles that Christ ever wrought, by this creating of him who was the worker of all those Miracles, and that even then when he does not cease to be; and (which is another great miracle) without making the Bread seem to any of our Senses any thing altered from what it was before. What honour or privilege may not they claim to themselves, that assure the people that they are the ordinary workers of so stupendious, so incomprehensible, and so impossible a Prodigie :

7. Verily they that have derived upon them so boundless and miraculous a power, which exceeds, nay is repugnant and contrary to, the strongest *Laws* of *Physicks*, *Logick* and *Metaphysicks*, can it seem any more than a modest claim in them to challenge an exemption from all *Politick Laws* also, unless of their own making :

Polit. lib 3.

For how holy, how sacred a person must he seem to the world, who so easily and so frequently can work so astonishing a miracle : And therefore how uncomely a thing would it be that the *Secular powers* should pretend any Dominion over one that is endued with so divine a power : Πάσα πολιτικὴν δὲ καὶ τῷ Θεῷ ἀρχεῖν ἀξιοῦν For it is as if they would take upon them to give laws to God himself, (as *Aristotle* speaks of his Heroically vertuous :) ὡς περὶ δὲ θεὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποις εἶνός τινος τοιούτου, For it is fit that such an one should be as a God amongst men, that is to say, such an one that is so eminently and superlatively vertuous as he there describes. What then must he be accounted that is thought to have a power (which is a more sensible Object of the peoples admiration) either equal or superiour to God himself, who, as ordinarily wise men conclude, cannot do any thing that implies a contradiction to be done :

Wherefore if the degenerated Christian Priesthood could persuade the people that they had the power of doing so huge and incomprehensible a miracle, that tends so infinitely to the advancement of their esteem; it could be no wonder that they were zealous maintainers of the Imposture, it conciliating to them, with such as believe it, so mighty credit and respect, and saving them the labour of that harder way of winning it, to wit, by unblemished Sanctity and Exemplarity of life, and by a true and sound knowledge in the Mysteries of the Religion they profess.

8. Wherefore though the Pretences and Excuses for the Invocation of Saints, the worshipping of Images, and the adoring of the Host be slight and triviall; yet we see the Self-ends of these Idolatrous practices may be very substantial and palpable: but both put together make up that Antichristian Fraud (and assuredly it is an eminent one,) that is discoverable in this first and chief Limb of Antichristianism, which is the Introduction of Idolatry into the Church of Christ.

CHAP.

C H A P. X V I.

1. *That Idolatry is the highest and most peculiar injury that can be committed against God.* 2. *That giving Religious honour to Saints or Angels, is really a reproaching them and blaspheming them.* 3. *The exceeding great Mischief done to the Soul of man by Idolatry.* 4. *That Idolatry turns men into bloody Wolves and Bears.* 5. *And is the Mother and Nurse of the foulest impurities.* 6. *That it is the source of all manner of wickedness, and eternal death to the Idolater.* 7. *The great Mischief it doth to the Church of Christ.* 8. *How the Church is lessened by Idolatry at home,* 9. *And the spreading thereof hindered abroad.* 10. *And consequently the whole World injured thereby.*

1. **W**E will now briefly consider the *Mischief* of this horrid enormity, which reaches either to *God*, (as much as any mischief can reach him) to *the Saints*, to *the Idolaters* themselves, to *the Church*, or to *the rest of the World*.

The sin of Idolatry is the most properly *injurious to God* of any sin, it so peculiarly touching the right of his Honour or Worship: which Honour he will not give to any other, nor suffer to be taken from him. And indeed it is highly reasonable it should be reserved entire to himself, no other Tribute being competent to him but this. For God, who is that Infinite Fulness of Perfection, can want nothing, but we having all received of his fulness, and possessing nothing but therefrom, it is according to the sense of that Eternal Law of Reason and ingenuous Gratitude, as well as according to the express injunction of the sacred precepts of Scripture, that there should be proper Homages of Divine honour peculiarly due to so Infinite a Benefactor, which to alienate or prophane by applying to any creature, ought to be reputed the most accursed and execrable Sacrilege that can be committed.

This robbing therefore of God of his honour, of which he every where professes himself so jealous, and so wrathfull a revenger, is the highest affront or injury that can be committed against that glorious Majesty of Heaven. Which point is so confessedly true, that it is needless any further to pursue it.

2. The next seems more Paradoxical, That by the excess of honouring and worshipping of the Saints we should *injure* them and abuse them, or by giving them over-much respect become guilty of disrespecting them. And yet it is in very truth so, if examined to the bottom. For the zealous and carefull yielding of that honour which is done to them implies our belief or opinion of their acceptance: but for them to accept of that honour or worship that is due to God, (as all Religious and Divine worship is) is to be Rebels and Traitors to the Divine Majesty, usurping, or at least accepting of his Rights and Prerogatives, and, in stead of being Saints and faithfull Subjects of Christ and his Heavenly Kingdom, to be transformed into *Titans* and *Giants* or Children of *Lucifer*, that

would ascend the throne of God, and divide his Empire amongst themselves.

Wherefore whosoever pretend that the Saints accept of such Homages or services to them, do in effect proclaim to all the world that they are proud and vain-glorious, nay that they are Traitors and Rebels against God; and thus instead of honouring them, do really injure them, reproach them and *blaspheme* them.

3. The *Mischief* that is done to the *Idolaters themselves* is very great and obvious to observe; *Image-worship* and *Saint-worship* debasing the Mind, and making it superstitious and pusillanimous, begetting in it a crass or gross conceit of things, making the spirits coarse and carnal and leaning towards Corporeal matters; so that the exteriority and palpability of the exercise of their affections in this sort toward Divine things inclines them with a greater proneness and readiness to be transposed upon other visible objects, and to fall quickly from caressing and embracing cold Statues and Images and such like sensible and palpable entertainments of their Devotions, to the courting of warm flesh, and to the polluting themselves with such sins of uncleanness as the ancient Pagan Idolaters were signally guilty of.

For indeed all such Ludicrous and Superficial Religion must needs leave the body of sin entire and untouched, and the inward Mind dead and starved; so that the full rains will be given to every impetuosity of the Flesh, and foul Lust and bloody Wrath and Zeal for those Idols of Fornication (as it fares in enraged Gallants in the behalf of their Mistresses) must rule and over-run all. The crassness, I say, of these Superstitions leaves the mind unmortified and unilluminated, but raises a zeal for them both ignorant, bloody and barbarous. Which, methinks, is a sad condition for any Soul to be found in.

4. But that this bestial Rage accompanies the love of Idols, (to omit several Examples in Scripture) is a Truth largely writ and testified by the blood of those innumerable companies of the primitive Martyrs, who with so much reproach and so many kinds of tortures were put to death for despising or opposing the ancient Pagan Idolatry, as is confessed by all. And *Idolatry*, whether *Pagan* or *Christian*, will naturally dispose them that are really devoted to it to the like cruel fury and madness. And though the cruelty of *Bear* or *Wolf* seems more the mischief of them that suffer by them, then the evil of those beasts themselves; yet for that *Circe* that metamorphoses men into these salvage shapes, few or none do doubt but that she injures their humane bodies. What a mischievous *Circe* then is *Idolatry*, that transforms the Mind into such beastly salvageness?

5. And as for *Uncleanness*, that it is so close an attendant upon the worship of Idols, is also a Truth very often intimated in holy Scriptures: Ch. i. 26, 27. as in the Epistle to the *Romans*, where the Apostle expressly affirms, that because the Heathen *changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creatour* (or rather *besides the Creatour*;) *for this cause God gave them up to vile affections; the women changing the natural use into that which is against nature, and the men likewise*

Likewise leaving the natural use of the women, and turning in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unseemly; and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error that was meet. Also in the first Book of the Kings, upon the mentioning of the building of high places and Images, presently is subjoined, That there were also Sodomites in the Land, &c. The places are so many and so obvious where even unnatural uncleannesses are link'd together with Idolatry, that it would be needless, as well as tedious, to recite them. And therefore it is a very suspicious thing, that where Idolatry seizeth most on the Church of Christ, all manner of uncleanness will there be most rife also.

6. But, methinks, I am too favourable in my charge against Idolatry, while I seem to restrain the Mischief of it only to Uncleanness and Cruelty. For the Authour of the Book of Wisdom does not stint the effects thereof to these, but enlarges them also to Disimulation, Theft, Unfaithfulness, Tumults, Perjury, and what not: * For the worshipping of Idols, saith he, not to be named, is the beginning, cause, and end of all evil. And S. Paul in the above-named Epistle makes it the fountain of all manner of vices and wickednesses: which he doth not rashly, but very rationally conclude. For even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge; so God, saith he, gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not meet; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, back-biters, haters of God, despightfull, proud, boasters, men of evil machinations, disobedient to parents, devoid of judgement, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. So great a deluge of wickedness breaks in upon men by their being addicted to Idolatry. For Apostatizing from God by this hainous sin, God also forsakes them, as the Apostle intimates.

And besides, The sottishness of Idolatrous worship, that calls out the Affections to such gross and unfitting objects, does naturally lay the sense of better things asleep, and extinguish the true life of Religion, which is the renewing the Mind into the Image or similitude of God and Christ; which consists in a holy and peaceable love, and in a pure, chaste and unpolluted spirit, unspotted of the vain desires of this present world. Whence the introduction of Idolatry into the Church of Christ must needs be the overflowing it with all manner of vice and wickedness. But that consideration belongs rather to the next point, The Mischief that redounds to the Church from Idolatry; to which I shall immediately pass, after I have but briefly intimated one Mischief more which falls upon the Idolater himself, and of which I think he will be most sensible; and it is only this, That he shall have his portion in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second Death, that is to say, that eternal Death and destruction that will assuredly attend all such enemies of God.

7. The Mischief that accrues to the Church from Idolatry I have partly hinted already, namely, that it is the most likely way to debauch her with all other manner of vices, and does ipso facto transform her, who should

Ch. 14. 24.

* Ch. 14. 16, 27.

Rom. 1. 28, 29.

Rev. 21. 8.

should approve herself the pure Spouse of Christ, into the abhorred condition of an *Harlot*. To which you may adde those great agonies and aggrivances of spirit that the true members of Christ are cast into by beholding such abominable practices ; besides their personal unsafety, and danger of barbarous persecutions, and those hard trialls and disquieting sollicitudes that naturally will attempt them, as they are men consisting of mortal flesh and liable to all the evils it exposes them to ; and finally the actual injuries , reproaches, imprisonments and multifarious Deaths that would fall upon the sincerest part of the body of Christ, for opposing, or refusing to partake with others in their Idolatrous Abominations.

8. And yet this is not all : There is still a *very grand Mischief* behind, and exceeding considerable, done to the Church by this fearfull sin of *Idolatry* ; and that is, *The hinderance of her spreading and propagating herself in the world.*

It is part of our Christian Faith, as we make profession of it in the *Nicene Creed*, That there is One *Catholick and Apostolick Church*. Which implies that the Church has a right to be *Catholick*, to be universally spread over the face of the Earth ; and that the true and proper Character of this *Catholick Church* is to be *Apostolical* ; That whatsoever Nation or People, or part of any Nation or People, profess that Doctrine and Discipline which was delivered by Christ and his Apostles, become immediately thereby *part of the Catholick Church* ; and those that profess and enjoyn Doctrines and practices that are *Anti-Apostolical*, run the hazzard of losing the true title of *Catholick*, and of making themselves indeed no part of the Church of Christ. And certainly *Idolatry* is as *Anti-Apostolical*, as contrary to the *Apostolick Doctrine*, as any thing can be.

Wherefore the introduction thereof into the Church of Christ is the rescinding so many Souls from the body of the Church as are persuaded to entertain it. Whence it is manifest that *Idolatry* is as it were a *Gangrene* in the body of Christ, and eats so much away from it as it seizes upon.

9. But this is not the sole *Mischief* of this kind done to the Church by *Idolatry*, viz. *The streightning the extent thereof by the divulsion of those that were her true members* ; but as considerable as this is *The prevention or hinderance from making them members that otherwise might be persuaded thereto.* For it is very visible that letting in of *Idolatry* into the Church of Christ, will for ever, while it there continues, exclude both *Jew* and *Turk* out of it, who are deservedly so great abhorers of *Idolatry*. To say nothing of the *Idolatrous Heathens* themselves, to whom it would be ridiculous to preach, as the Apostles did, *to turn from dumb Idols to serve the living God*, whenas they might easily see beforehand, that it would be but the turning from their wonted Idols to the serving of new ones.

It is a fearfull thing therefore to profess the *Church Catholick*, and yet by introduction of *Idolatry* to streighten it at home, and hinder the propagation of it abroad by such horrible Scandals.

10. Which

10. Which is not only a *Mischief* to the Church herself, in curbing her growth and eclipsing her glory; but a sad disaster to the whole *World*, (which is the last evil issuing therefrom:) it being to them the most certain pledge of everlasting happiness, to become members of the *Catholick Church* of Christ; of which there is little hope in either *Jew*, *Turk*, or *Heathen*, that are conscientious, while this stumbling-block is in their way, and that they cannot profess Christianity without the allowance and practice of *Idolatry*. Which in my apprehension ought to be reputed a very sad calamity upon Earth.

Thus we have seen a competent Description of the *First main Limb of Antichristianism*, namely, *Idolatry*, brought into the Church of Christ, under pretence of honour to him and the Saints; with a discovery of the *Falseness* and Unwarrantableness of that Doctrine and Practice, and the gross *Fraud* and grand *Mischiefs* that accompany it.

CHAP. XVII.

1. That a multitude of slight Observances may amount to an intolerable burthen.
2. That no Religious observance can be slight while it has an obligation upon the Conscience.
3. Though this general estimate of the burthen of Superstition from obligation of Conscience and multitude of Observances might suffice, yet he will add a more particular Draught of this Limb of Antichristianism.
4. Of Anointings, and of the Multiplicity of Sacerdotal Ornaments.
5. The pretence and Self-endedness in these Ornaments and Anointings.
6. The Mischief arising from these kind of Ceremonies to Priest and People.
7. A more full description of their Publick Service.
8. That respect to the Priest is better sought and more certainly found in the Power of Life and Doctrine, than in any Histrionical Pomp.
9. Which is so unsatisfactory to the serious, that it may hazard their departure.
10. The Opinion of a miraculous power in religious Vestments.
11. The Falseness and Fraud of this Opinion.
12. The ill consequence thereof.

1. **T**HE next Limb of Antichristianism is, The burthening and entangling mens minds with *Scrupulosities* in either unnecessary or hurtfull Observances and Opinions, laying an equal or greater yoke on Believers, by reason of the Multitude of these Rites and Superstitious conceits, then *Judaism* it self did upon the people of the *Jews*, and thereby frustrating that End of Christ's coming, which was, To put a period to such burthenome and unprofitable Ordinances, and to conciliate to himself a Church that should worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth.

Which Burthenfomness, as I have already intimated, may arise merely from the multitude of these Ceremonies, though the things may seem slight considered singly and in themselves; as Feathers, that are singly light, may by their number grow heavier than a mass of Lead: And what

what a man may sometime doe out of Idleness or wantonness, to wit, stoop to take up a straw, or to divide clay or dirt into Squares or Oblongs; yet to be kept close to this task, how little different is it from that vile *Ægyptian* bondage of being condemned to the perpetual making of bricks or gathering of stubble?

Gal. 5. 1. 2. Besides that every toy to which there is once a Religious obligation girds hard with those that are serious and consciencious. And such followers Christ expects, and therefore neither he nor his Apostles would burthen them with any thing but what was necessary. But we are exhorted rather to *stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free*, and not to suffer our selves to be brought under the bondage of any servile and unprofitable burthens of Superstition. And our Saviour Christ rebuking the Pharisees tells them plainly, that *they worshipped God in vain, while they taught for Doctrines the commandments of men: Forasmuch as laying aside the Commandments of God, they held the Traditions of men, as the washing of pots, and cups, and brazen vessels, and the like.*

Mark 7.

Wherefore if our Saviour Christ was so tender in the behalf of his Disciples, that he would not have them superstitiously ensnared, no not in so commendable and easy an observance as *the washing of the hands ever before they did eat*; certainly it is utterly against his mind to have his followers intangled and enthralled in an innumerable multitude of less usefull Ceremonies: Which, be their natures what they will, yet if by their numerosity they equallize the burthen of the *Judaical Rites*, this general estimate is sufficient to discover it to be no inconsiderable *Limb of Antichristianism*, in what Church soever such an enormity shall appear.

3. Which I speak not, as if I found it beyond my skill to pourtray this *Limb of Antichristianism* more articulately, with stronger sinews and more full and solid muscles. Such a draught therefore of *Ritual Ordinances and Dogmatical Observances* I will now draw, as I dare appeal to any indifferent judge, whether it will not prove an eminent part of that Mystery that opposes and defeats the purposed Ends of the coming of Christ into the world; which assuredly were to free his followers from Sin and Superstitious slavery.

4. And truly observing how tender and carefull our Saviour is in keeping off the least taint of Superstition from his Disciples about *washings* and *eatings of meat*, and how expressly he affirms to them in that excellent parable, That *nothing that enters into a man defiles the man*; it will be easy thence to infer, that much less any thing that hangs upon him, or is about him, can Sanctifie or make him holy.

Mark 7.

Whence in the first place, though I do not lay the greatest stress on it, If we should suppose the Christian Priests to heap to themselves several sorts of *Consecrated Garments* for greater Ornament and *sanctimonie*, insomuch that every Priest's Vestments would vie in number with the Vestments of *Aaron* the High-priest, and imitate also his in *Analogie*, his *Breast-plate*, his *Ephod*, his *Robe*, his *broidered Coat*, his *Mitre* and *Girdle*; and the Bishops, not content with these, should adde for

for the further adorning themselves (as if they had a mind to out-doe the Ceremonial Habiliments of *Aaron* himself) *six* more holy Ornaments, nay I will suppose *nine* more; besides the consecrating of these Priests with *holy oyl* on their shaven Crowns and in their hands, which become thereby so sanctified, that the more devout would eagerly and zealously kiss the hand of the Priest strait after his Ordination, hoping thereby to partake more fully of his devotedness and sanctity: What were this, I say, but to *Judaize* under Christianity, and to illaqueate the minds of men with such Superstitions as our Saviour Christ came to set them free from? Which intimation is sufficient to shew the *Falseness* and groundlessness of such an Oeconomy in the Church.

5. But as for the pretence for such kind of *Aaronical* Ornaments, I can imagine none, unless it be the imitation of the *Levitical* Laws, which is a very bad one; those Laws being to be abolished by Christ. Besides that the Robes of *Aaron* were of a more * profound and important signification then to be imitated upon any slight or superficial design: as well they as other *Mosaical* figures being prescribed according to a certain Pattern exhibited by God in the Mount; which being the *shadows of things to come*, do naturally vanish in this Meridian and Vertical Sun-shine of the Gospel. And therefore to bring in so many New shadows, is to envelop the Church with darkness, and divert us from the rightly understanding of the meaning of the Old; which assuredly were all Types of that more full knowledge of *Jesus* Christ and of that inward and Spiritual Sanctity we have in him.

* Appendix to the Defence of the Philosophick Cabbala, Ch. 5. Sect. 2, 3, 4.

But that advantage which this erroneous Priesthood might seek to it self herein is this; That by these *Histrionical disguises* and *peculiar adornings* they may become more honourable in the eyes of the People, who are much struck with outward shews, I mean the simpler sort of them; and that their Persons may be accounted very holy, whose *Ordination* is with such pompous Ceremonie, and whose *sacred Unction* makes it in some sort to vie with the *Coronation* of Princes. Could they be more through-paced in the imitation of that great high-Priest of the Jews, and adorn themselves with what in analogie should answer to his * *Urim* and *Thummim*, that is, *Illumination of mind and Sincerity of heart*; that indeed would be an happy emulation, and would absolve them from an over-rigorous pursuance of the rest.

* See the Preface General to the Collection of my Philosophicall Writings, Sect. 3.

6. But so it is according to our Hypothesis, that instead of so great a good there follow these Inconveniences: That this Sacerdotal Pomp and Gayness to those Priests that understand the nature of Christianity is both a Scandal and a Burthen; to those that do not relish Christianity in the right sense of it, it is to them an occasion of insufferable pride and conceitedness, and of great security and neglect of those true and indispensable endowments of the Christian Priesthood, of that *Anointing* ^{1 John 2. 27.} which will teach them all things, even that of the Holy Spirit of God, which is not lodged in consecrated Garments, but in those purer habits of the Mind, in the Inward man wholly and thoroughly dedicated to God, by perfect and real abrenunciation of himself, and of the flesh, the world and the Devil, by entirely giving up ones self to the sincere Love of

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God

God and of his Neighbour, to Purity and Sobriety of life, and to unfeigned Humility and Self-denial. Which real Accomplishments should be the Foundation of respect to the Christian Priesthood, not those exterior Ornaments that may be the covers of a Beast or Devil.

And lastly, for the People themselves; As some are liable to be miserably deceived by those external Poms, so others to be much offended; I mean those who are more seriously set upon the real duties of Christianity, and find their wholesome appetite mock'd, not fed, with those outward shews in the publick Service of God.

7. Which we shall better understand, if we make a more plenary representation of their Publick worship, and adde to the *Consecrated Garments* of the Priest the dedicating of an *unknown Tongue* to their Publick Prayers and Offices, to the great disedification of the People. What spectacle could one behold more Antichristian? "To see a man in those Sacerdotal disguises, all of them consecrated and dedicated to the purpose, himself having had both *Head* and *Hands* anointed with holy oyl, standing in an anointed Church, and at anointed Altar, with his anointed Chalice and other anointed Utensils; whose *Church-yard* is holy by the consecration and benediction of sprinkled *Holy-water*, for the frightening the Devils from hanting that consecrate ground, and molesting the sleep of the bodies of the Dead, nay, whose very *Bells* of his Steeple are Christned and Chrismatized for the chafing away the foul fiends out of the Aire at the departure of a Soul, by their tolling or ringing: To see him in his holy postures now at the one end of the Altar, now at another; now turning his face toward the people, now his back-side; one while holding up his hands, another while holding them down, another while a-crois at his breast; now making with his hand a single Crofs, now two or three Crosses together; now sitting, then standing, and another while stooping and kissing the holy Altar; now speaking aloud, then muttering to himself in a lower tone, but always in a tongue that is not at all understood by the People: To see, I say, such a Sight as this, and to compare it with that of our Saviour, *The hour cometh when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit, and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him*; It would necessarily extort from the Spectatour this just Censure, That these are either false-worshippers, or our Saviour's prediction not true, or else the completion thereof past in the simplicity of the Primitive times; or rather that if he would find these true Christian worshippers, he must seek them somewhere else: for here is neither *Spirit*, nor *Truth*, nor intelligible language, but all more dark and blind and dumb then in the very Midnight-shadows of the *Mosaical* Dispensation.

John 4.

8. And therefore (as I was a-going to conclude) as the more sottish people will be liable to be even brutishly amazed and amused by this unintelligible and unedifying pomp and spectacle, and be made the more obnoxious to all the Frauds and Tyrannies of this Unchristian, though over-much Anointed, Priesthood; so the more nasute will be tempted to look upon it but as a kind of circumforaneous Masking or Mumming, nor easily be persuaded that what is so *Histrionical* or Stage-play-like is serious

serious in any thing but in what the other Stage-players are, which is in the emungeing the people of their money.

Wherefore it would not be any wonder to see these better-spirited Christians abhor from these shews, as being so perfectly opposite to the ancient plainness and simplicity of the Primitive Teachers, who, as our Saviour himself, spake and did all things *bonâ fide*, and did not distance themselves from their flocks and charges by any *garish pomp* and *multitude of sanctimonious dressings*, but being even as they were, in a manner, saving that they were greater Examples of Faith, of Humility, of Brotherly kindness, of Contempt of the world, of Patience, and of power of Speech, and effectual Exhortation, and Conviction of mens minds for the corroborating their belief, and inflaming their affections with the love of true righteousness and holiness, (which was an unimitable and *indeleble Character* of their Christian Priesthood) kept and commanded the hearts of the Believers by this Authority of the Spirit discovering it self in the power of Reason and sincere Rhetorick, and sealed and tied all close to them by that indissoluble cord of a reverential and respectfull Love, which accru'd to them by the purity and unexceptionableness of their conversation; they *teaching* (as it was said of our Saviour) *with Authority, and not as the Scribes, who taught, but did not.*

9. The reflexion upon which excellent Patterns will strongly tempt the better-spirited people to look upon these Sacerdotal pomps and disguises as a kind of Superstitious and Hypocritical *Mummery*, and to urge them in the earnestness of their zeal to condescend to approach nearer to them, and to lay aside their Masks and Vizards, and to deal faithfully and apertly, and to declare to them the Truth of Christ, and the Good will of God as it is revealed in his Word, for they profess they are willing to embrace it and to follow it, may they but understand it; nay they are hungry and thirsty after it, but find no food nor comfort in dumb shews: which if they will refuse to doe, they are those that cannot admire this way, but rather abhor it, and must leave it, and seek such Pastours as will deal with them in plainness and simplicity of heart.

For assuredly such gross and worse then *Judaical* Corruptions in a Church would force the most serious Believers to forsake the Community thereof, and drain it, as much as is possible, of the sincerest and best-disposed people of Christendom. And this I think is no small nor contemptible *Mischief*; the departure of *Lot* being a fore-runner of the raining fire and brimstone upon *Sodom*:

10. But I have not yet evolved all the intangling Superstitions that may lie wrapt up into these Religious or consecrated *Vestments* and *Habits*.

For it is not impossible but that they may befool the credulous with the belief of some miraculous virtue abiding in them by the power of *Consecration* or *Benediction* of the Priest or Bishop. As that, for example, they have the virtue of recovering men from Diseases; of fraying away the Devil and chasing him out of the possessed; of procuring remission of sins, both to Guilt and Punishment, by the putting them on; and of saving a soul from Damnation, and sending her safe to the blisses

of Paradise. So wonderfull power lies hid under these religious Habilliments. Which conceits notwithstanding are so ridiculously groundless, that he deserves to be laught at that would seriously goe about to confute them.

Acts 19.

11. But some small pretence for the truth of them may haply be fetched from that passage in the *Acts*, concerning the miraculous virtue of the body of *S. Paul*, That *from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them*; and from the virtue of *Christ's* garment, the touch of whose hemme cured the woman of her Bloudy issue.

But we are to consider That *Christ* was the Son of God, and *Paul* a chosen vessel, and those first times were choice and peculiar times of the Church, that required such *miraculous assistances* from God for the planting of the Christian Faith: that Miracles are for the *unbeliever*, not for those that already believe; and that those cloaths came from or hung upon such bodies as were really *anointed* with the Holy Ghost, and that in a full measure; not rubbed or smeared in the hands or on the shaven crown with a little ointment, that gives only an extrinsecal Sanctity, fills no man with the Holy Spirit, much less to such height that he can work Miracles.

Wherefore to make the people believe that the *Habits* of either *Priests* or *Monks* have any such virtue in them, is nothing but an abuse of them into a mighty opinion of the *Sanctity* of those persons, the touch of whose very Cloaths is of so great virtue and Sanctity. I say, the End of this Imposture is nothing else but the extolling and magnifying the Priest and other Religious Orders of the Church, unless this esteem carry along with it also some pecuniary advantages.

Rev. 3.

Ephes. 6. 11.

12. But the evil consequence is the cheat of the people into a feebleness of spirit, and a neglect (I say not, of the advice of the Physician, but) of his counsel who speaks to us *to buy of him white rayment, that we may be clothed and that the shame of our nakedness may not appear*: or that of *S. Paul*, *to put on the whole armour of God; to be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might; to gird our loyns about with Truth, and to put upon us the breast-plate of Righteousness, to take unto us the shield of Faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.*

For this furniture assuredly is infinitely more powerfull against the approach of the Devil or diseases, then all the holy Habilliments that the Wardrobe of the Church can produce; and will sooner quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, then whole pots of *Holy-water* squirted against him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

1. *Of the Enchanting or Exorcizing of Water, Oyl, Salt, Wax-candles, &c. with a general intimation of the Mischief thereof.* 2. *Of the Exorcizing of a Golden Rose and Lamb of Wax.* 3. *That the using of the Name of the true God in these Exorcisms does not hinder but that they may be properly termed Enchantments.* 4. *Other Instances of their being Charmers and Magicians; with an Anticipation of an Objection.* 5. *The Fallhood, Fraud and Mischief of these Exorcisms.* 6. *The derivation or distribution of these Exorcized Elements into several Superstitious uses.* 7. *Of the supposal of the Infant's being possess'd, and of Baptismal Spittle.* 8. *Of Extreme Unction, and other Superstitious practices upon the dying man:* 9. *As also upon his Corps laid out.* 10. *The Fraud and Mischief of these practices.*

1. **T**HE mention of *Holy-water* puts me in mind of another *Classis* of *Superstitions*, which might be invented contrary to the Faithfulness and Simplicity of the School of Christ, to the illaqueating of men's consciences, and misplacing their dependences upon Creatures more than the Creator, and to the extinguishing of that comfortable inward sense of his invisible, but omnipotent, Omnipresence, by interposing these vain and visible Objects, which have neither force nor allowance for those uses they pretend to; I mean, the *Exorcizing* or *Enchanting* (if you will) of certain Natural Elements, without any warrant of holy Scripture, to endue them with a Supernatural power.

As if, for example, the Priest should pretend by the *Exorcizing* of the Creature of *Salt* by the living, true and Holy God, to make it become an *Holy* and *Exorcized Salt*, for the health of both Body and Soul to as many of the believers as receive it; and for the chasing away of every evil Phantasm and unclean Spirit, by the aspersion thereof: and so by the *Exorcizing* of the Creature of *Water* in the name of the Holy Trinity, to endue it with a virtue of chasing away the Devil and Diseases and every disquieting thing out of an house by the sprinkling thereof, and should recommend the use thereof for the besprinkling their chambers ever and anon therewith, as also their sick folks, their fields and vineyards, for health and increase. The *Exorcizing* of *Wax-candles* into a virtue of putting to flight the Prince of darkness with all his Retinue, and of making them run away with fear and trembling from what-ever place they are lighted in. The *Exorcizing* of the Creature of *Oil* by God the Father Omnipotent, the Creator of all things, that whosoever uses it, the Troups of the Devil may be put to flight, and that he may never be bit by the old Serpent. Also the *Exorcizing* of *Herbs* or the *Boughs* of *Trees*; the *Exorcizing* of *Bells* and the *Priestly Vestments*: Is it not apparent that all these, and as many more else as can be invented of this nature, are mere Juggles and Impostures?

2. But the Imposture would be more grateful and complete, if we had

some fine thing consecrated, that were more portable, and yet of a more universal influence, as also more durable and permanent then most of the former. And therefore the shape of some holy Plant or Animal thus exorcized would be of sovereign use and content, *the Rose of Sharon*, or *the Lily of the valleys*, the *Dove* or *Lamb*, whose names are sacred to every Christian eare.

Wherefore a *Golden Rose*, impregnated with joy and gladness from the Benediction of the holy High-priest of this Church, and full of the fragrancy of remission of sins; increase of faith, (though the effect be never found) Divine protection and all prosperity, *were a Posie to wipe the Nose of a Prince withall*. And so the gentle *Lamb* made of some more flexible matter, and elegantly limb'd, suppose out of *Wax*, but exorcized into powers and virtues little inferiour to that *Lamb of God* that takes away the sins of the world, as being made able by a certain sacred Exorcism or Benediction to preserve them that bear it about with them from all the assaults of the Flesh, the World and the Devil, from Pestilence, Famine and sudden Death, from all perils by Land and by Sea, from Lightning, from Tempests and from Abortion, were a Present for an Emperor or Emperess.

Several such Instances as these might be excogitated, all which I must pronounce to be against the faithful plainness and true power of the Gospel of Christ, and to entrench upon the Reverence of the Name of God, and to be a trespass of the Third Commandment, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*.

3. Against which Precept I make account those *Forms of Conjurat-ion* do evidently offend that are found in Books of Magick, as in *Cornelius Agrippa* and *Petrus de Abano*, where those Divine appellations, *Jah, El, Adonai, Elohim, Elohe Zebaoth, Elion, Sadai*, and the like, are made the Elements of their vain and reprobate Art. Which is a manifest argument that the Priest's Exorcization in the Names of God and his holy Attributes does not excuse him from the guilt of *Enchantment*, since the Magicians themselves use the Names of the true God therein.

And as for the more general Notion of *Enchantment*, *Agrippa* defines it to be nothing but *The conveyance of a certain mirificent power into the thing enchanted by virtue of the words and breath of the Enchanter*. Nor will the phrases or passages of Scripture excuse the Priest from this impiety, since this is both prescribed and practised by these Magicians. Their *Pentacles* which they hang about their necks when they conjure (which they forsooth for greater grace call the *Pentacles of Solomon*) are adorned and fortified with such transcriptions out of holy Scripture.

Whence it is plain, if any one would take notice of all the special Characters of such an Apostate Church as I am a-describing, he could not omit amongst other Titles to brand them with the name of *Enchanters* or *Sorcerers*.

4. Which they might deserve upon other scores, which we have already intimated, as in that they teach people *certain Prayers in an unknown*

unknown Tongue, which they direct them to say for such and such purposes. For what are these but *Charms*? And the making of *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, (who was above sixteen hundred years ago crucified at *Jerusalem*) upon the uttering a few words, personally to appear flesh and blood and bones, all mantled over with the thin cloathing of certain *Panaceons* Species or loosely-hanging Accidents, is a piece of *Magick* above the Witch of *Endor's* and all the Historical records of *Necromancy* in the world. All which pretensions being so Epidemical or general in this Church we do characterize, who can miss of notifying them by the style of a *Society of Magicians* or *Enchanters*?

For in that they are mere Pretences, and have no real effect, will not excuse the desert of so goodly a Title, the profession and endeavour giving the Practisers sufficient right thereto. As he that has been casting his Angle a good part of the day into the River, and brings home no Fish, may yet be rightly saluted *Mr. Fisherman* or *Mr. Angler* at his return, though not without some kind of Scommatism at the bottom: And he that professes Physick, and has it may be as yet cured none, (but such as would have recovered as well without him) though killed many, is notwithstanding by all men termed a *Physician*. And generally what men affectedly pretend to, though they cannot perform it, may justly by way of Scommatical reproach be entered into the particulars of their character, for the making up the whole tale of their shame and reproof.

5. What grounds they might make shew of for such Incantations as these, I must confess I cannot so easily find. For the *Bloud of the Paschal Lamb* wherewith the *Israelites* sprinkled the lintel and two side-posts of their doors was not charmed first to convey a virtue into it of frightening away the destroying Angel, but was merely a present Sign, as also a Type of the sprinkling of the Blood of Christ, who as a Lamb without spot was to be sacrificed in future ages for the sins of the world. Nor were the *Water and Ashes of the Heifer* mingled together with any Exorcism or Enchantment that we read of in Scripture. Nor did *Elisha* charm the *Salt* before he cast it into the Waters to heal them, but he used it as a circumstance onely or sign in the healing of them: which Ceremonies Christianity has nothing to doe withall, nor is there any reason to bring in any more of the ancient Types or Figures then are already made use of by his choice who was unerrable.

The ground therefore of such usages is none at all: but the pretence to such power as this, so strangely and marvellously to enchant things to such mighty uses, would make much for the honour of the Priest, who cannot but hereby seem *miraculis*, a very great and adorable person to the credulous people, and these Exorcized commodities would be ready money with as many as had belief in them.

But the worst is, *Faith* and *Temperance* would be look'd less after, and *Pots of Holy-water* and enchanted *Lambs of Wax* would stop those inward living springs of the Spirit of God in the Heart, and help to extinguish that sense of Innocency, then which there is not a greater Tower of defence to a believing Christian against all the fiery and thundring Artillery of the Prince of the Air.

6. These be the most gross and fundamental Superstitions, that look like *Magick* or *Sorcery*, which yet might be derived and deduced into various uses and practices; as in the *Visitation of the Sick*, in *Extreme Unction*, in *Funerals* or *Burials*, in *Christenings*, *Churchings* and *Marriages*, where *Holy-water*, *Exorcized Oil* and *Candles* might be frequently made use of, and some of them truly not without some considerable trouble; as in *Anointing the Sick*, their *Eyes*, *Ears*, *Noses*, *Mouths* and *Hands*, nay their *Feet* and the *Reins* of their *Back*: the latter whereof may cause troublesome contests betwixt natural Modesty and Religious zeal in those that have a penitent sense of the transgressions of those parts.

The conjuring the Devil also out of the Infant that is to be baptized would seem a frightful thing to the Infant himself, if he understood in what an ill plight the Priest supposes him, while he makes *three Ex-sufflations* upon his face, and uses an *Exorcistical form* for the ejecting of the foul Fiend, who is imagined very saucily presumptuous to take such timely possession of him, to whom he could not but see that Christ *Jesus* had apparently a better right, as being the off-spring of them who were already his, the Child being born of Christian Parents. But here may come in also (beside other Ceremonies) the use of the *Holy Oil* for the anointing him on the fore-head and breast, the putting upon him *white Vestments*, and into his hand an *holy Candle*. And, which is more holy than any *Oil* or *Candle*, the *Priest's own Spittle* is also to sanctifie his *Ears* and *Nostrils* by a gentle smearing thereof on those places. And lastly, that all may be sound and wholesome, the *holy Salt* may also be put into the mouth of the Child, that his words, when he can speak, may be the more savoury.

Thus may the use of the first consecrated Elements, you see, go far, and make the Christian Sacrament of *Baptism* exceed in Ceremonie the Judaical, nay their *Circumcision* it self: whenas the use of that one Element of *Water* were sufficient, and *One* dipping as significant of the *Unity* of the Godhead as *Three* are of the *Trinity*. Yet such large and prolix Shadows might Christianity cast, when the Sun of Righteousness grows towards his setting in the Church.

7. And it is much if something might not appear affrightful to the Women in this approaching darkness. For though it be a gay thing for the Priest to be thought to have so much power over the Stygian Fiend, as to *Exorcize* him out of the Infant; yet it may be a sad consideration with some melancholick women laden with Superstition, to think they are never brought to bed, but they are delivered of a Devil and Child at once; and that if their Child should die before *Baptism*, the Devil having got bodily possession of him, will certainly carry him thither where the greatest affection of a Mother dares not so much as desire to give him a visit. Which indeed would argue the necessity of speedy *Baptism* to the height, but withall deprees the afflicted mind of the melancholick Mother with unspeakable anxiety.

The Delinution also of the Infant's *Ears* and *Nostrils* with the *Spittle of the Priest* may sometimes strike harshly upon the spirits of the more delicate; but it makes much for the opinion of his Sanctity, whose
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spumeous excrement is of so sacred a virtue, and will gain also the prayers of all the women in the Town, that he may ever be an hail and found man.

8. But it were very unequal if the Load of Superstition should be lay'd wholly upon tender Infancy and our first entrance into this world. Surely that severe Goddeffs will make them feel her weight also in some measure who are in a way of departing out of it. And truly that Ceremonie of *Extreme Unction*, that pretends to make the passage more glib, to a man not Superstitious would make it more rough and troublesome.

The ripping up their Breast also by that sharp tool of *necessitated Confession*, and then an over-reaching Satisfaction excited to the advantage of this or that holy Order, or the uses of the Church, will easily distract the mind of the dying penitent betwixt the care of his own Soul and the provision for his dear Wife and Posterity. But frequent aspersions of *Holy-water* shall be his dilute comfort; and he shall have before his eyes, so long as he enjoys the light, Assistants more cold and dead then those that have lien four days in the grave; the Image, suppose, of Christ on the Cross, another of the Virgin *Mary*, and a third of the Saint to whom he had particularly devoted himself; where he may, if he will, salute the Virgin's Idol in the very words in which the Angel *Gabriel* once did her. But if he would lay aside complements and speak the truth, he might take up the complaint of *Job* touching these lifeless companions, *Miserable Comforters are ye all*.

However in the Interim, what the frequent sprinkling of *Holy-water* can doe, and making *Crosses* on his breast and forehead, or the urging upon him the belief of every tittle the Church has defined to be true, (the Soul now so near her departure being more quick-sighted in those abstruse Mysteries) or the promise of *Prayers* and *Oblations* when he is in the other State, shall not be wanting for the ease of his Soul: which in his breathing of it out, if he should commend into the hands of our Lady, instead of our Lord *Jesus*, who is God every-where ready to save, that precept from the Priest would be flatly against the expresse Commandment of God, and it would prove a sad Catastrophe of his life to the dying man, to spend his last breath in so foul a sin as *Idolatry*.

9. But however, as if all had been rightly performed, the Body may be laid out in a decent manner, and a Crucifix put in the hand of the deceased, resting upon his breast, or at least his hands be laid a-cross in stead of a Crucifix, and *Holy-water* be duely sprinkled upon him; which whatever virtue it may have to chase the Devil from the Corps, yet it will scarce wash his Soul clean from that last sin he committed, nor guard the house from being haunted with Birds of several colours and feathers, that ever smel out a comfortable refection from the fall of every such Carcass. So great a pother and clatter may *Superstition* make as well at the *Exit* as Entrance of men into this mortal life.

10. In the midst of such Formalities as these, I must confess the Priest cannot but seem a man of marvellous might and power to the ignorant by-standers, such as have been nuzzl'd up in the belief of these Superstitions, he administering such present and conspicuous Remedies for the comfort of the sick, as the Fiend-trying *Holy-water*, the *Images of the blessed*

Blessed Virgin and Tutelar Saint, holy Wax-candles, and the like, guarding the very Corps, by the power of the Cross and the sprinkling of that Exorcized Element, from all the incursions of the Enemie and every evil Phantasm. But the dying person what benefit he can take by the having his mind distracted and called out to these dead shows, I must confess I understand not, nor can conceive but that they are an hinderance to that more pure and collected passage of the Soul into bliss; and are to the spectatours of these Solemnities the occasion of neglecting those better and more inward *Amulets* against the terrour of Death and fear of the Devil.

Such I mean as *the Renovation of their Minds into the Living Image of Christ, and the triumphing over the power of Sin through the taking up his Cross in the mortifying all our evil concupiscences in our life-time, and the arriving thereby to the comfortable joyes and refreshments of the Spirit, and to a permanent and habitual sense of the Mercy of God through a lively Faith in Christ Jesus,* (wherein we cannot miss of the assurance of the remission of our sins;) which are the most *saving* and most *holy Waters* that we can solace our selves with or ease the grief and agonie of our minds withall, the most precious *Oyl* or *Balsam* that can be poured upon an afflicted conscience. The breathing after which excellent condition is naturally stopped and stifled by a vain belief in these external shows, and by the relying on these multifarious Enchantments of a Superstitious and imposturous Priesthood, who would bear men in hand that they can carry a Soul through safe to Heaven by *exorcized* Elements and *Magical* Artillery levied against the external assaults of the Devil; not considering in the mean time that the radication and growth of sin and disobedience makes the Soul herself in a manner become a Devil, and will necessitate her to undergoe the fate of that accursed crue.

CHAP. XIX.

1. *The burthen of Spiritual Cognation, and excessive Numerosity of Holy-days.* 2. *Perpetual abstinence from Flesh in some Religious Orders. The Fraud and Mischief thereof.* 3. *The burthen of vowed Coelibate.* 4. *The more dangerous purposes thereof.* 5. *The ordinary services done by the Monasticks to this Antichristian power we describe.* 6. *That its establishment is much corroborated by the Interest of Monasteries;* 7. *And enriched by being Heir to all professors of Coelibate.* 8. *The great Mischiefs of Coelibate.* 9. *Of Flagellation.* 10. *The ineffectualness thereof, Hypocrisie of the Penitent, salvage Pride of his Church, and the Mischiefs resulting therefrom.* 11. *Of Pilgrimages and Jubilees.* 12. *An enumeration of several other Antichristian Austerities.*

1. **B**UT we have leapt thus from one extreme of mans life to the other, whenas there are several things yet to be considered which may make

make the middle space thereof tedious and entangled, may be unnecessary hinderances to him in his affairs of the World, may be sore afflictions and vexations to his Body, or disturb his Mind with grievous and sad perplexities. I will hint only some few Instances of each.

As, for example, if persons by being Witnesses at a Christening should contract thereby such a *Cognition* as, though it be Spiritual, yet, according to the Canons of this Church we describe, should hinder Marriage betwixt all the Kindred of the child that is Christened and their own; what straightness must these conceits cause in the marrying of a son or daughter; whole Neighbourhoods necessarily contracting such *Spiritual Affinities* by doing Christian offices one for another? The plot whereof could be nothing else but to drain mens purses of money for the procuring of dispensations from unnecessary Laws and restrictions.

The *Number* also of *Holy-days* may be so many, and the observation of them so superstitiously and so strictly commanded, that it may be an unspeakable burthen to the generality of the people, who live by their labour, and must starve when they cannot work. But the design is the same as before. For multitude and frequency of Transgressours brings in Mulcts and Fees to the Ecclesiastick Officers; though the smallest penalties must be very cruel that are wrung from poor Labourers that have but from hand to mouth.

2. Again, suppose a considerable number of men were tied up to the *Abstinence from flesh all the days of their lives*, by a religious or rather Superstitious Rule they are under, in such sort that death were more eligible unto them then to tast of Flesh, by reason of that hold their *Vow* had taken upon their consciences: What an Iron yoke would this be upon so many Christian Souls? How moped and frantick must such *Monastick* severities of diet, of lodging and watching make several of them that are entangled in the slavish fetters of this *Babylonish Captivity*? For which there is no pretence, but that they are so good-natured that they are resolved to merit not only for themselves but for others, and that many such Rivulets concurring together may fill up that Treasure of Merits which the Church must have the keeping of, to sell at a good rate to those Virgins that want oyl to their Lamps.

This is the *publick Fraud*: but the *private* is a certain *Hypocrisie* in these men, whereby they often shake off the indispensable yoke of Christ and the Rule of his Word, by over-valuing of, or craftily hiding themselves under, the self-chosen Sanctity of these Antichristian Rules. And a further *Mischief* is, that the conceit of meriting thus for themselves and others puffs them up with pride and insolence, and makes them thereby more abominable then they who are under no such peculiar *Rules* or *Orders* of Religion.

3. But there is another *Abstinence*, which urged with like severity and strictness would be equally burthensome to the generality of men, if not more, and is an Institute that seems expressly contrary to the mind of the * Apostle, who makes it a Character of a Church Apostatizing from the purity of Christianity, as he does the other also, namely, that of *Abstinence from meats*; but this is *The forbidding to marry*. Which prohibition

* 1 Tim. 4.

prohibition is not only against the express Law of God, but of Nature also, who, unless in some few, (who may have a peculiar gift of Chastity) is a severe exacter of this Tribute to the common upholding of Mankind. And therefore with them *Marriage* cannot be well omitted; without very high penalties inflicted by that *Nemesis* that is interwoven in the very Law of Nature thus transgressed, which I will leave to Physicians more accurately to discourse.

Wherefore, I say, to make prohibitions against Marriage, suppose to all *Priests* and *Deacons*, and to an infinite number of Religious Orders of men besides, restrained to the Rules of a *Monastick* life, and to make such *Vows* as these equally if not more sacred than the very bonds of Wedlock, would be upon Christendom as *Antichristian* a yoke as almost any Servitude whatsoever can be devised; and would put men and women, that were seriously set to observe it, but surprized in the undertaking it, (by either superstitious menaces, or fraudulent glozings and promises) into such Agonies of Mind and afflictions and distempers of Body, that the burthen would be unsupportable.

4. But yet this designe would be sure to be driven on in a Church rancidly Antichristian, it being of so great advantage for the Ecclesiastical Powers. For there being nothing there devised with faithfulness, but for the Interest of the Church; let them that are ineptly serious under these *Monastick* or *Celibate-Vows* be pricked as much as they will, as long as there will be held no breach of this Obligation but by taking of a Wife, swarms of men will come under the profession, who becoming in such a peculiar Religious way the members, or rather vowed Subjects, of the Antichristian High-Priest, are thereby really the Military strength of his Hierarchical Empire, and being either hardly or leudly brought up, may at a dead lift serve his designs in a more carnal or secular warfare.

But in the interim, such of this Note as are made more mad by Solitude and Superstition may of their own accord, or by virtue of their *Vow of Obedience to their Superiours*, being called thereto, approve themselves forward and zealous Assassins for the stabbing or poisoning of Kings, or dispatching any one that appears considerable against the Interest of this Church of Apostasies. Such a dangerous brood of *Serpents* and *Vipers* may crawl out into the world from the solitary dust and shades of these Monastick caverns, who may embitter the people, and poison the hearts of subjects against their Sovereigns, and, like the African *Faculi*, strike through the breasts of Princes in a sudden surprizal, and spill their Sacred blood upon the ground.

5. But this use is more remote, and lies next to the bottom. That is more overly and exposed to sight, That the profession of so hard a task as totally to abstain from the greatest pleasures of the Flesh, upon a design of a more certain merit of the joys of Heaven, and withall to be so clad as makes a shew of being mortified to all the delights of this world, upon a firm expectation of those future contents in that to come, cannot but work much upon the simple and credulous, as if these were the most serious and earnest solicitors of Religion that one can hope to meet withall, and that that Church must undoubtedly be true of whom they profess

profess themselves the devoted Members; and therefore being very numerous, and at leisure singly to assault every one, they would prove the most apt Instruments to captivate or detain the world under this Antichristian power we describe, that any one can imagine.

6. The multiplied *Convents* therefore of such Angelical Fraternities, how can they but be so many Fish-ponds digged out for the draining of the Wealth of the respective Nations and Provinces wherein they are made: where every one will be forward to help them in common that pretend to possess nothing in particular; nor to use any thing but for mere necessity or for Pious uses, they being so wholly castrated and mortified to the world. But professing a life so Seraphical, and gaining to themselves even a glory with men beyond what other Achievements of the world will easily procure, their *Convents* may prove honourable Harbours of retirement even to the Nobler sort of Persons who are otherwise misfortunate in their affairs, or whose birth exceeds the proportion of their riches. Which Accommodations so largely extended is such a binding Interest with all sorts of people, that it is no small establishment, according to humane prudence, to the safety of this Antichristian Polity we speak of.

7. To all which you may briefly adde, (for I would not be over-large) that so general a *Profession of Celibate* in this degenerate Church tends much to the *enriching* thereof, it naturally falling to her share to be heir, these devoted Members of her necessarily dying without any Issue they may own. To say nothing of what monies may come into the Holy Pontifical Purse, when it is a thing of moment to dispense with any ones *Vow of Celibate*.

These may be the *Self-ends* that may be aimed at by this Antichristian prohibition of Marriage, against the Law of God and the directions of the Holy Apostles of Christ *Jesus*.

8. But the *Mischiefs* which I shall briefly intimate are manifold. For them that are surprized in their Vows, and seriously resolved; but naturally unfit, to keep them, there attends them a tedious servitude under indiscreet or at least severe Governours, and an irksome and sickly solitude. But as for others, the issue is foul and noisome in them, even to the turning of this false Church into a true *Sodom* and a cage of unclean birds.

For this Hypocritical profession of an Angelical Chastity with them will but be the mother of Adultery, Sodomie and Fornication, and of the bloody and remorseless murdering of poor Infants as soon as they come out of the womb, or more timely if they can rightly hit on it.

To which you may also adde the weakening and unpeopling of Christendom, and making it less able to oppose their forein enemies: This false Ecclesiastical Polity, which I am now a-delineating, being more solicitous how without controll to domineer and tyrannize over the Lay-party, then to secure the common Christianity from the Inrodes and Invasions of Unbelievers. But, as our Saviour said of old, *The Thief cometh not but to steal and to kill and to destroy*; and therefore it is no wonder if he have no care nor forecast for the safety and preservation of the Sheep.

9. But there is yet an harder burthen that Superstition may invent, and be either added to some of the *Monastick Orders*, or imposed as Penance,

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or voluntarily inflicted on a mans self out of a blind intoxicating zeal, the practice being applauded by this not Mother, but Stepdame Church, and it is in a word *Flagellation or Whipping a mans self cruelly and blondily for a Religious satisfaction, or else for Merits*. A custom so harsh and salvage, that it is more befitting the Altar of *Diana Taurica* then the Temple of Christ, and has no precedent unless in those Religions which were of the Devil's own setting up, whose sport was his Tyrannizing over poor despised Mankind. Such a Pastour as this is not onely a clipper but a slayer of his Sheep, and exquisitely opposite to his Spirit who promised his followers that *his yoke should be easie, and his burthen light*.

10. But such hardships as these, as they make a shew in the flesh, so they tend nothing to the right chastising and subduing of the corruptions of the spirit, and are but like the whipping the Cart and letting the Horses go free. That chastisement that reaches to amendment of life, and the bringing the Inward man under the obedience of Christ, is *a resolute denial of acting any of the suggestions of the flesh*. This will wound the sinning principle more home, and will really heal the Soul in the conclusion. But the other cannot well be countenanced but upon an Hypocritical affectation of a pompous kind of Severity, wherein this false Church may ostentate her own power over the minds and bodies of men, and take a secret joy in the relish of this wonderful Empire she has got over the World, even to a vile kind of bondage and vassalage.

But in the mean time such *American* cruelties as these may well hazzard the life or health of the abused Penitents, and will not fail to bring a very loathsome reproach upon the School of Christ, making it look like salvage Paganism and the Synagogue of the Devil.

11. That also were a kind of Paganical injury put upon deceived Souls, and a great wearisomness and drudgery to the Body, to be engaged in long *Pilgrimages* to salute this or that Saint's Image for better reconciliation. But the Offerings tend to the enriching of that Church, and the Resort of *Pilgrims* to the enriching of the Town, and thereby to the conciliating of the affections of the Towns-men to so gainful a Religion.

But in the mean time the *Pilgrims* affairs at home are left at sixes and sevens, his Children to the sole government of his Wife, and his Wife to the oversight of the Ghostly Father, and what other humane Visitants shall put in for her comfort in her Husband's absence.

To *Pilgrimages* might be added *Fubilees* at the great Metropolis of this Apostatized Church, which though not so frequent, yet at their celebration would be frequented from the remotest parts of Christendom with multitudes of devout Strangers, upon belief of pardon of their sins for so holy a voiage. But the end and inconveniences of this Solemnity would be much the same with those of *Pilgrimages*, saving that this is more peculiarly designed for the replenishing of the High-priest's coffers.

12. It were an endless business to reckon up all the manners of Superstitious molestations which might be invented for the bodies of deceived and enslaved Christians, under the pretence of fulfilling the Laws of Christianity and of the Church: Such as *Going a considerable way bare-footed and bare-headed; The putting themselves into cold congeling Springs, the*
water

water gushing upon their bare breasts; The rolling themselves in beds of Ice and Snow; The creeping upon their bare knees on stony Causeys to the cutting of their skin and flesh; and making all run with blood; The wearing of hair-cloth next their skin, and a girdle of nails and needles; with many such like tragical extravagancies, concerning which I have nothing new to take notice of, but that they are quite contrary to the ingenuous Spirit, that breaths in true Christianity, and (as I said before) do too much assimilate the Religion of Christians to the bloody Superstitions of barbarous Pagans.

CHAP. XX.

1. *The Burthen of afflictive Opinions.* 2. *The distracting puzzles of a Soul intangled with multifarious Superstitions and Conceits.* 3. *The illaqueations of Religious Vows.* 4. *Intanglements arising from a Superstitious trust in certain surmised virtues in the Mass.* 5. *Vexatious Scrupulosities concerning the Intention of the Priest in administering the Sacraments.*

1. **B**UT to let pass these incommodations of the Body; Christianity may be made very uneasie and uncomfortable by several rackings and distractings of the Mind by unnecessary Obligations of the Conscience by entangling Conceits and Opinions: which also being innumerable, it were to no purpose to go about to reckon up all. But some few obvious ones I shall venture to name; such as *The supposed duty of worshipping the Cross, the Images or Reliques of Saints; The conceit of communion of Merits; The intanglement of Vows; A superstitious trust in the Eucharist, and in the power of the Priest's Intention in that and other Sacraments; The belief of the necessity of Auricular Confession, and of the Assent to every of the smallest points of Doctrine held by the Church, though there be no footsteps thereof in the Scripture, nor any ground in Reason; The excruciating fear of a worse then Pagan Purgatory; and finally the necessity of Renal Satisfaction and Merit.*

A man may pronounce these words without blistering his tongue; but if he once imbibe them as Principles obliging the Conscience, and be superstitiously intangled in them, he will sleep as uneasily by reason of the unsettledness of his Mind, as if his bed were strowed with chopped hairs or pulverized glass. There is no redemption of the quiet of his Spirit but by taking of a lusty draught of that Soporiferous potion that will make him repose himself wholly on the faith of his Priest, to say and to doe just as he will have him without any disquisition or reasoning, and so to metamorphose himself from a rational cautious Man into a mere passive Ass for the false Prophet to ride upon.

2. But if he were seriously set to promote his own happiness upon the account of his own judgment and diligence, how would he be distracted in the multiplicity of the Objects of his Devotion? For if it be so meritorious to visit the Shring of one Saint, it will be the neglect of his own Salvation to omit another. And if the Saints be so ambitious as to be pleased by

our Religious Invocation of them, the invoking one may it not bring upon us the displeasure of the rest who are pretermitted? And if I make one of them my Patron, why may I not suspect that I have thereby made the rest mine Enemies by slighting them, were they thus desirous of Divine Honours as we conceit them?

And as concerning their *holy Reliques* that are offered to be kissed by the devout, what pangs of conscience may there arise for our not cordially committing our Lips to the meaner and more unlovely sort of them? How can a man sleep quietly being stung with the sense of so irreligious a piece of incivility, suppose it were but to an holy foul Handkerchief or some other old yellow linen?

There being so mighty power also in an *exorcized Cross* for conservation of health both of Soul and Body, and for the driving away every evil Phantasm, (and the like reason there is of *Reliques*) what conflicts of mind must this cause in the seriously Religious, who, having been able, has not all this time purchased such a safeguard to himself and his house, or, being pinched betwixt the sense of poverty and quick urgencies of Devotion, cannot resolve whether he had best purchase it or no, or when he has, is at a loss how many times a day he should crouch and creep to it, to draw that secret virtue from it which was lodged therein by an holy Enchantment or Exorcization of the Priest?

The same reason there is of *Holy-water* (how often to be sprinkled) and of *Exorcized Boughs*, and the like. And for the *Communion of Merit* by being incorporated into this or that holy Sodality or Fraternity, how anxious would it make a man of his choice, that he may be best supplied, and how ambitious of entering into as many as he can?

3. And for the *Entanglement of Vows*, how easie were it for men to be caught in them, as a Woodcock in a Net? What an harsh and slavish thing is it to be under the *Vow of unlimited Obedience* to one that I am not sure but may command me (under the pretence of an allowance from an infallible Power) to act what in my own conscience is against the Law of God, of Humanity, and of Nature? What various occasions also there may be of making sundry rash Vows, according to several Passions, Exigences and Importunities, in a Church where they are so much in fashion, and the performance tends to the enriching thereof, (as also the being absolved from the Vow made, by special dispensation) I will not here insist upon; for these things are infinite.

4. There might arise great incumbrances of thought also from a *Superstitious trust in the virtue of the Eucharist abused for such ends as it was never intended for*. It is ordinarily called *Mass*. And if it had such virtue and efficacy as this Church would pretend, as of the delivering of Souls from punishment in the other state, and for prosperous success in this; for safe journeying by Sea or by Land, on horse-back or on foot; for Women that are barren, big, or bringing forth; for Pevers and Tooth-aches; for Hogs and Hens; for recovery of lost goods, and the like; what multifarious misgivings of mind and anxieties of conscience would issue from thence in those who more carefully considered these virtues and privileges?

Wherefore where it is believed that by the power of those *Five words of Consec-*

Consecration, Christ does condescend to give himself into the hands of the Priest bodily and personally, to be lifted up and offered to his Father, for the succour and safety of the Good mans Sheep or Poultry or other meaner concerns; how can the said honest man be quiet in his thoughts, believing the irresistible importunity of so stupendious a Sacrifice, and the sure effect thereof, (which will be more certain in matters of more consequence, *Are you not of more value then Sparrows?*) if he have not his recourse to the Priest as far as his purse-strings will stretch (and his conscience will be often racked and stretched to save his purse-strings) upon every occasion of the sickness of his cattel, the delay of his wife's belly, in the danger of child-breeding or child-bearing, in his or any of his family's travelling, and the like, for fear he be accessory to any of those misfortunes that may befall them for want of timely applying himself to so certain means of prevention; and if the miscarriages prove Tragical, fancy his neglect the sin of Murther.

Math. 10. 31.

Nay how can men with a good conscience abstain from spending themselves to their very skin, in laying out money for *Masses* for all their friends and kindred, and then make strict inquiry amongst the poor that may be neglected in that point? Or at least how can they shun being miserably distracted betwixt the fear of impoverishing themselves, and the compassion they bear to them that they fancy may be tormented in the other world for want of some such relief?

Such superstitious surmizes as these will indeed bring grist to the mill in plenty for them that infuse them into the heads of the people, but will grind and grate so hard against the believers of such principles, that they must live very ill at ease under this load of a false and adulterate Religion.

5. Which will again be hugely increased by another superadvenient Incertainty, and will cause a greater dissettlement and wavering in all such deliberations, where their propensions would otherwise carry them with more confidence to the succours of Religion and the Assistance of her Sacraments. For supposing their Effect depended on the *Intention of the Priest*, our own both cost and devotion were utterly lost, if he out of malice or remissness should have his *Intention* diverted from the work. Which though it tend immensely to make the Priest great and formidable and a little God upon Earth, as having the power, if not of damning, at least of making the Salvation doubtful of as many as depend upon the sincere exercise of his function, in Baptizing, administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and in absolving them from their sins, (which that he may discharge faithfully, men will be obliged not onely to give him his dues or wages, but to honour him by all manner of observance, lest he should doe them or theirs some everlasting remediless mischief,) yet it were a plague and fret of mind beyond all expression to the poor credulous Laity, that were made to believe that God had put the power out of his own hand, and unless his Substitute would and intended it should be so, that the Almighty himself could not implant one into the body of the Church, nor the party implanted partake of the grace signifi'd by the Lord's Supper, nor receive express Absolution for his sins, though all things upon his own pious desire were externally administered by one professedly in holy Orders. Which must needs perplex the Religionist with a perpetual uncertainty of his own and others Salvations.

CHAP. XXI.

1. *Of the necessity of Anniverfary Confession.* 2. *Of Sacerdotal Abfolution.* 3. *What is meant by Binding and Loofing, and to what manner of persons Remiffion of fins is committed.* 4. *Erasmus his glos upon that Text of St. John.* 5. *As also Hugo Grotius his, whence Auricular Confession and Abfolution prove groundlefs.* 6. *A voluntary Confession and in general ufe in the Church in fome circumftances, and in order to particular Abfolution from the Priest.* 7. *As also a more particular Confession, if voluntary.* 8. *The Self-ends of this Church in exacting fo punctual a Confession from men.* 9, 10. *The flavery and Mifchief of fuch kind of Confessions.* 11. *The infinite vexation to the confciencious and ingenuous from the obtruding upon them incredible and impoffible Opinions.*

1. *Abfolution* puts me in mind of the pretence of neceffity of *Confefling* once a year at leaft (and that to the Priest of the Parifh) all a mans fins, not onely actually committed, but the very purpofes, defires, or propenfions to the committing of them. Which might rightly be called *Carnificina confcientiarum* indeed, and is as bafe a piece of fervitude, and to as ill purpofe, as if that all the modeft Maids and grave Matrons in the Parifh fhould ftrip themfelves ftark naked, and in that manner humble themfelves before their Priest once a year: Which would look like a piece of unfupportable Tyranny.

And yet this extorted *Confeflion* upon pain of Damnation not to conceal any thing, is not the ftripping of a man to his naked body, but the ftripping him of his body, that they may fee his naked Heart, and fo by the force of this Superftition break into thofe fecrets which it is the onely due privilege of God Almighty to be acquainted with, who is the onely rightful *καρδιογράφος*, and can neither receive any hurt by feeing the moft inward motions of his own handy-work, nor will, knowing whereof we are made, doe us any; but will judge with equity in all things, nor will defpife the work of his own hands.

2. The pretence for *this Confeflion* is the neceffity of *Abfolution* by the Priest, which if a man, through his own neglect, have not, he muft be undoubtedly damned. But that any *fuch Abfolution* is neceffary, unlefs upon the cafe of juft Excommunication, cannot be made out by either Scripture or Reason. For when it is faid to *Peter*, to the Church, or to the Apostles, *Whatfoever ye bind in earth fhall be bound in heaven*, or, *Whatfoever ye loofe in earth fhall be loofed in heaven*; and, *Whofe foever fins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whofe foever fins ye retain, they are retained*; It is impoffible the meaning fhould be, *Remit or Retain, Bind or Loofe*, whether right or wrong, I will ratifie all above, whatever the Succelfors of my Apostles fhall doe, nor fhall any remiffion of fins be ratified without them, though they fucceed onely in the external profeffion, and partake not of the fame Spirit with their Predeceffors. Wherefore

Matth. 18. 18.

Joh. 20. 23.

fore so large and accurate a Commission cannot belong to any but either to the Apostles themselves, or to men of a true Apostolical spirit, who are entirely of one mind with God, and therefore can do onely what is right.

It being so rare therefore and so difficult a thing to find such a *Confessor*, it is an argument such an *Absolution* is not necessary: For neither God nor Nature are wanting in necessities. But the *Binding by Excommunication*, and the *Loosing* answering thereto, is of another consideration, and concerns the external Oeconomy of the Church.

3. But to speak truly, That phrase of *Binding* and *Loosing*, above cited out of Scripture, seems not so much to respect *Persons* as *Things*. For it is *ὃ ἐὰν δέχηται*, and *ὃν ἐὰν δέχηται*, not *ὁ* and *ὁ*, or *ὅς*, *whatsoever*, not *whomsoever*, and reflects upon the known phrases of the Jews, who called that which was declared unlawful *לִיגָטוּם* *ligatum*, but that which was allowed as lawful they called *לְפָטוּם* *solutum*. And therefore that passage does not respect *Absolution* from sin, but the making of Laws and Institutes for the Church by the Apostles, which Christ says he would ratifie in Heaven.

But that other place (*Joh. 20.*) of *remitting* and *retaining* mens sins does undoubtedly respect *Absolution from sin*. But mark to what manner of men this power is committed. *As my Father sent me, so send I you*, (now Christ was sent full of grace and of the power of the Holy Ghost) and therefore he *breathing* upon them, says, *Receive the Holy Ghost*, and did most certainly impart it to them. And thereupon is derived upon them that authority, *Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained*.

4. Whence *Erasmus* excellently upon the place, *Qui ex his posterioribus cristas erigunt, & Tyrannidem quandam sibi vendicant, cur non meminerunt eorum quæ mox præcesserunt? Toti turgemus mundano Spiritu, & tamen placemus nobis autoritate commissa remittendi aut retinendi peccata. Tuere autoritatem, sed cura ut adsit Spiritus per quem Christus tribuit autoritatem*. Which implies that where this Spirit is not, the Authority is not; and that a man cannot rationally be either comforted by the *remission*, or dismay'd by the *retaining* of sin, when it is from such *Ghostly Fathers* as are devoid of the *Spirit of Christ*.

5. Moreover *Hugo Grotius* does soberly and with judgment, I conceive, interpret this place, of *Remission of sins by Baptism*, or *Reception again into the Communion of the Church, if any be lapsed after Baptism*; but the *Retaining of sins* to be *Non-admittance* of these into the Church who are not yet penitent Believers, or the *Excommunicating* them out of it upon a lapse worthy so great a Censure. But what is this to an *Anniversary Absolution* which must necessitate and squeeze out such an unnecessary and unreasonable Confession? *St. James* saith, *Confess your sins one to another*: whose style was ill directed, if it had been such an indispensable duty to confess unto the Priest, and in such a manner as has been described, so frequent, so punctual.

This Anniversary Provolution therefore of a Penitent upon the floor at the feet of a formal Confessor, with eyes and hands devoutly lifted up to-

ward him sitting in his majesty, is no part of true Christian Discipline, but (as *Eraſmus* has well intimated) a piece of Antichristian Tyranny; it being a thing *very loathſome* and *burthenſome* to be bound to unboſome a mans ſelf to him of whoſe judgment, friendship or fidelity we can have no aſſurance; and very *intolerable* to be forced to ſpeak of ſuch things as we do not allow our ſelves to think of, and that before ſuch as we may probably ſuſpect will conceive ſome ſinful pleaſure by the diſcourſe of them.

6. The Injunction therefore of ſuch a punctual *Confession* has no ground at all in either Scripture or Reaſon. For neither did the Apoſtles nor Chriſt himſelf require any ſuch particular and complete enumeration of mens ſins, nor left in charge with their Succeſſors to doe ſo. And it is ſufficient more generally to confeſs them with a ſerious profeſſion of deteſting and reſolution of leaving them: wherein if the Penitent will diſſemble, he may as well diſſemble the number and circumſtances of his ſins. So little pretence can there be from hence of this Injunction.

But if he profeſs his ſorrow and reſolution of amendment, and by reaſon of ſome weakneſs or melancholy cannot lay ſuch faſt hold upon the Promise of remiſſion upon unfeigned Repentance, without this viſible and palpable ſeal ſet thereto, of *Sacerdotal Abſolution*; I do not ſee but a Prieſt anointed with the Spirit of Chriſt, and full of holy compaſſion to a penitent member of his Church, may rightfully and profitably, by that Authority which was derived upon the Apoſtles and their Succeſſours, and by that divine power that aſſiſts the ſincere exerciſe of his Miniſtery, ſeal to him the Remiſſion of his ſins, by pronouncing his Abſolution, and ſo reſtore to peace his diſquieted Mind; his ſins being as certainly pardoned as if Chriſt himſelf in perſon had abſolved him, he in ſuch a caſe as this aſſuredly ratifying in Heaven whatever is here tranſacted upon Earth. Which I ſuppoſe *Grotius* himſelf will not deny, nor conceive at all claiſhing with his interpretation of *S. John*, he not pretending thoſe he mentions the only occaſions of *remitting* or *retaining* of ſins, but the moſt notable.

7. And as this *Voluntary Confession in general* to the Prieſt in order to the Penitent's Abſolution is uſeful and commendable; ſo likewise a Voluntary unboſoming a mans ſelf in a *more particular way* to ſuch an one as he could truſt, and can preſume fit and able for his office, to the end that he may have a more perfect underſtanding of the ſtate of his Soul, and thereby adminiſter more ſutable and effectual counſel, is a thing queſtionleſs of very good conſequence.

8. But to extort from every Believer every year, or oftener, a punctual enumeration of all his tranſgreſſions in thought, word and deed, with all their circumſtances, were but a vile and diſingenuous pretence of inſinuating into all mens boſoms, for the getting out their ſecrets, of which the Prieſt may make his private advantage, or communicate to the Church-politicians ſuch matters as will tend to the ſtrengthening of their diſtinct Intereſt, which is, *The conſerving or promoting that Honour, Wealth and Power, which they affect in the World.*

And truly by this means the ſecrets not of this man or that woman, but of whole Families and Cities, nay of whole Provinces and Kingdoms, and

and of all Christendom, may flow together into that common Cistern, or, if you will, Sea of Ecclesiastick Intelligence: which is the very Eye of Action, and the Soul of Conduct in all affairs.

9. But though this would be a sweet morsel to this Pseudo-Clergy we are now describing, it would be sour sauce to the Laity; not only in that it is a foul badge of an inevitable bondage upon them, to be constrained upon pain of Damnation at least once by the year to cast themselves down upon the ground before them that are so many fathom sunk into the Earth themselves, and to reproach themselves by ripping up their own faults accurately and punctually before such as they have no assurance of either their Candour, Judgment or Friendship; (and for a man to bask his own Priest in this case would be to brand him, and so make one of his chiefest neighbours his greatest enemy;) I say, besides the external slavery of the business, and the doing of a Ceremonie which may goe so much against the hair even with good and ingenious spirits, a man may be obnoxious to very great dangers and mischiefs.

For he that has the office of hearing men thus accurately and necessarily accusing themselves once a year at least, has a greater opportunity of unjustly defaming them (by some tacit insinuations or somewhat expresser notices) then is fit to be put into the hand of any man that is not a Saint upon Earth: of which sort we suppose in this Polity we speak of extremely few.

10. *Interrogatories* also from such Confessours may, in greatest likelihood, prove to young men and women Lessons of sin and lust; and the knowing of the secrets of Families, the seeds of infinite contentions betwixt Neighbours, and also betwixt those of the same Families. For it will be a hard thing for those that by this Shriving of persons know much of their Interest or disinterest, to hold their itching fingers from acting or intermeddling in their affairs, or their other prurient parts from the soliciting the Chastity of such parties as they find hopefull and coming; or not to be officious Intelligencers or Game-finders for such as pursue the pleasures of *Venus*.

Besides that the vainness of their *Penances*, which yet must needs look like the right value of the Sin, may harden men into a conceit that there is no great hurt in sinning, and teach them to esteem the transgressing of the Law of God as a thing slight, cheap and trivial. Whereas if the only *Penance* of sin were the pain of forsaking it, urged upon them from the certain expectation of that most direfull Judgment to come; though no other condition but that were annexed to *Absolution*; it would make men more sensibly feel the weight of sin, and make them make the greater speed to get from under the burthen of it. But to draw to an end.

11. That also will pinch very hard, especially upon the more Intellectual or Rational complexions, namely, *To be bound in their Conscience upon pain of Damnation to hold whatsoever the Church professes to be true*, while she in the mean time obtrudes such things upon mens belief as have no ground neither in Reason nor Scripture. For even in things that are disputable either way it is the fate of some men notwithstanding to be

in a manner invincibly inclined to conceive this part to be true rather than the other. What struggling and conflicting therefore must he undergoe to hold to the Authority of the Church against such strong and fatal Sentiments of his own Mind?

But if the Church should be thus Dogmatical not only in things that may, according to the sense of the generality of men, be either way, but conclude and require the belief of such things as are point-blank against either Scripture or Reason, and are impossible according to the Faculties of all men, who are unprejudiced, to be true; as, *That one and the same Body may be wholly and entirely in a thousand places at once, and at a thousand miles distance betwixt all those places; That we may worship a graven Image,* and the like; how unevenly must these conditions of Salvation sit upon the spirit of him that is not a mere sot? What reciprocations of belief and misbelief, of hope and despair of Salvation must such an one be tortured with; that holds that his share in eternall blis depends upon the hearty belief of the truth of the Church in all things, when what she propounds, according to all his Faculties, is not only unlikely, but impossible to be true?

CHAP. XXII.

1. *The dreadfull Figment of Purgatory.* 2. *That by this affrightfull Fable the whole Moles of Superstition hitherto described is made infinitely more weighty and burthensome.* 3. *The Antichristian Doctrine of Christ his Satisfaction reaching only to the freeing us from the Guilt of sin, not the Punishment.* 4. *The multifarious drudgery and slavery this Doctrine and that Figment of Purgatory casts men into.* 5. *A confutation of the said Doctrine and Figment.* 6. *That it is impossible that the sincerely-minded in this life should finde either Hell or Purgatory in the other.* 7. *That there is no ground for this Antichristian Purgatory in either Scripture or Fathers.* 8. *The gross Fraud and grand Mischief of this Fiction.* 9. *The conclusion of the description of this second Limb of Antichristianism.*

1. **A**ND now in the last place of all, to make up the full weight of this Antichristian yoke and burthen, suppose there were added the fear of a more then Pagan Purgatory, as I said; that is to say, Suppose the Church should determine That no Souls, unless such as are absolutely pure and perfect in this life, (of which rank there are either really none, or if there were, they would not be so immodest as easily to account themselves so) should upon their departure out of this Body goe into any easefull or blessed condition, but into a state little different from the torments of Hell, saving that they are not perpetual, but may be for many and many years, unless some care be taken to relieve them and rescue them who are in this sad and dismal place: which I suppose they would set out with all extremity of horreur to the rude people, telling them of many sad and ghastly

ghastly Apparitions, who with wan countenances and mournfull tones have made known their extreme distress in this Infernal house of Correction, and have implored their assistance in praying and paying for them as much as they could, that they might find ease.

2. Nor would they forbear the exaggerating this unsupportable calamity by all imaginable Mythologie: as namely, That the Souls of men were seen in a Vision, by some holy man of God or other, to be tortured in wonderfull manners; some standing up to the knees, others to the navell, other some to the arme-holes, others to the very chin, in a stream of fire and brimstone: that others are run through with rods of Iron, and roasted against the fire like Geese upon a spit, the foul infernal Fiends in the mean time some blowing up the coals with their black mouths, or, to save their own breath, with a large pair of brazen bellows; others lading up the grease that fries out of these roasted Souls and pouring it upon them again scalding hot: that others are scourged with whips of red-hot wires, others fried in frying-pans, others racked and turned round upon a wheel full of hot burning hooks: that others had their bowells torn out with the fiery crooked stings of huge overgrown Toads and Serpents; and lastly, that others are put into vessels of hot scalding metalls: These dismal chambers of Death re-echoing in the mean time from their hollow roof the mournfull howlings and hideous shriekings of these tormented Ghosts.

These or such like terrible fancies of things did they but imbue the minds of the people withall, the belief of them certainly could not but screw the whole-rack of this burthensome Superstition, which I have been all this time describing, to the highest pitch that the wit of man can invent; nor could the flames of this *Purgatory* fail to prove that very Fire in which these slaves and vassals of the Mystical *Pharaoh* and his hard Task-masters (I mean that Apostate High-priest with the rest of his adulterate Hierarchy which I am delineating) should droyl and sweat in, for the finishing their imposed tales of brick to build these sons of pride their Pyramids and Palaces.

3. Wherefore being stript and spoiled of all these comfortable succours that the true Faith in Christ *Jesus* does afford men, and being made to believe that the Passion and Satisfaction of Christ takes away onely the *Guilt* of *Mortal* sins, not the *eternal Punishment*; but yet, which is a great favour, that by the power of the Keys this *eternal Punishment* is turned into *temporary*, which everyone is bound to undergoe, and satisfie either in this life or that which is to come, and that either in his own person or by some other, that is, He is bound to doe or suffer such things himself, or others for him, as the Church shall appoint or accept for satisfaction; which also is to be understood of *venial* sins; and lastly, that the spots and filth of sin inhering in our Nature must wholly be purged out by Satisfaction and penalties, which if it be not fully done in this life, it must be perfected by the expiation of Fire in the other: I say, if the people should be deluded by such Antichristian Doctrine as this, and have the sweet and easy yoke of Christ taken off from their neck, (which consists onely in sincerity, to the best of our power, to live according to the plain and

and indispenfable Law of Chrift, and wherein we fail, to be affured that both the *Guilt* and external *Penalty* is taken away through the interceffion of him who is our Advocate with the Father, and a perpetual propitiation for our fins) but instead of this eafy and ingenuous fervice, fhould be fettered and held faft in that *Ægyptian* bondage we have defcribed, into what a world of flavery and drudgery would miftaken mortalls be haled?

4. How would they be forced to beftir themfelves by thefe hard Task-mafters! what trotting from Church to Church, from Shrine to Shrine! what howling and muttering before this Saint's Image and that Saint's Image! what knocking of breafte, and kifling of pavements! what faftings and watchings, not for correction, but fatisfaction! what long ftretching Pilgrimages from Country to Country, and from one end of the Earth to the other! what prayers and oblations to make the Image, or at leaft the Priest, to fmile! what kifling of unfavoury Reliques! what Vows of *Cœlibate*, and Abftinence from meats! what Flagellations and Excoriations of the Body! what Nundinations of Pardons and Indulgences! what awe and fervility to the Priest! what ftrict obfervation of Fafts and Feflivalls! what vexatious Scrupulofities about needlefs opinions! what abject poftures and rufull looks in forced Confessions! what covering themfelves with Religious habits! what imprifoning and confining to Nunneries and Cloifters, to Solitudes and Hermitages! what creeping of dying men into Monks Cowls, and rowling in beds of Afhes! what befprinkling with Holy-water! what Anointing and befmeared with enchanted Oyls! what haftening to enroll themfelves in this or that holy Fraternity, to fhare in their merits! what shaving and paring away of Childrens portions for hired Maffes and Prayers, to fmg the dying mans Soul out of this imaginary Purgatory! In fine, what endlefs circuits of drudgery and labour of body and mind does this *Ægyptian* Tyrant put his flaves unto under the lafh of this torturing conceit, "That the Death of Chrift is not for the Remiffion of "Punifhment, but of Guilt; and that he that would goe to Heaven muft "travel thither upon his own proper coft and charges, muft fatisfie in his "own perfon for his faults and corruptions in fuch ways as this adukterous "Church has prefcribed!

Which is no method of freeing Souls from the pains of *Purgatory*, but of the inflaving them (as I have faid) to a worfe then *Ægyptian* bondage, and condemning them to gather stubble and make bricks, to work and drudge to hold up the wealth and magnificency of this imperious *Pharaoh* and his cruell Task-mafters. Which is a Servitude as abominable and Antichriftian as can be invented or imagined. For it does abfolutely change the condition and nature of Chriftian Religion (then which there is nothing more free and ingenuous, and more professedly opposed to the yoke of the *Mofaical* Law) into a poor, pitifull, ignorant and fervile Pedagogie, and makes it not only exceed the burthen of *Mofes*, but (which I cannot too often inculcate) the very bondage of *Ægypt* it felf.

5. But though this Figment of *Purgatory* would be a very profitable invention

invention for the increasng of the wealth and power of this Pseudo-Clergie, and bring vast revenues to their Church; there being a like fear of it and desire to be rid of it, in Princes and Peasants, in Gentle and simple; yet it cannot be denied by any, but such as are past shame, but that it is a mere Figment, and has no grounds of truth at all in it, nay is contrary to what is most certainly true.

For it is assuredly true, and any good Christian may feel it to be so, that Christ has satisfied as well in respect of *Punishment* as *Guilt*, and it is perfect Non-sense, that the sincerely-minded should be justified by the merits of Christ's Passion and the excellencie of his Person, (he being that innocent Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world,) that is to say, in a Forensal sense be esteemed as Just, and yet be handled or treated as Sinners. For it is as if a man should be acquitted and yet punished for the same crime, at the same Court, then which nothing is more foolish or incongruous.

Wherefore it is manifest that there can no external punishment abide the Sincere soul after this life, (for I cannot pronounce any thing in the behalf of the unsincere, but that Hell it self is their portion,) no fire, no whips of Furies or Devils to afflict them, no infernal Bailifs or horrid Pursivants of *Purgatory* to arrest them; but they may pass free through all guards and scouts of the invisible Regions, and not one dare to offer to molest them.

6. And that he that was sincere-hearted in this life, and did not onely believe in Christ, but to the best of his power and skill followed his Precepts, and had a real enmity against all the appearances of sin whensoever they assaulted him, nor could be overtaken or overcome by the importunity of his Body without sorrow, regret or indignation; that this man should carry in *himself* any tormenting Hell or *Purgatory* in his freedom from the body, is a thing impossible and unconceivable.

For he being freed from that with which he was so often forced to tuggle, and in the midst of his greatest conflicts his life being comfortable to him through the sense of his own sincerity and through the assurance of the Love of God in Christ *Jesus*, what can Death be to such a man but *Life from the dead*? He that in patience can possess his soul in a prison, cannot fail to enjoy himself in the fresh aire; and he that can walk upright in fetters, may easily, if he will, dance for joy when he is out of them. So little fear is there of any such *Mormo's* or Bug-bears to the sincere Christian when he has passed out of this mortal life.

7. Some pretence indeed they may have for *Purgatory* from that passage in S. Paul, *If any mans work be burnt, he shall suffer loss, but himself shall be saved; but yet so, as by fire* which is the only place in Scripture which makes any show for them. But yet if it were meant of a *Purgatory-fire* after this life, it will not at all serve their purpose, as neither those several passages of the Fathers do, which seem to make this way, which would be too prolix a business to enter into. But the interpretation which *Scaliger* and *Hugo Grotius* give of the place is so genuine and natural and so little inferring any such *Purgatory-fire*, that this ground will prove very lubricous to the builders upon it. For *subiectas* and

ὡς διὰ πυρός Scaliger and Grotius expound thus, *That he shall escape, but get out of the hot fire*, it being nothing but a proverbial expression signifying the great danger he will be in. Σωζέσθαι ὡς διὰ πυρός est proverbiale, ad significationem summi periculi. So that the sense is nothing but this, *He will hardly escape the dreadful judgment of God.*

As for Origen's ἢ μετὰ βαπτίσματος καθάρσις πυρός, and the like expressions of the Fathers, they will never establish such a *Purgatory* as these Masters of mischief would erect in the Universe, who make sure that no man may doe any thing meritorious in this condition, nor make any progress in grace and holiness, for all the very *Fire* is called *Purgative*. For this would beat down the price of Pardons and Indulgences, make men careless of hiring *Masses* for the dead, and take away all that costly solicitude from friends for their deceased kindred, if they were conceived to be in a capacity by their own demeanour and careful management of their affairs in the other world to wind themselves out of trouble.

8. But how weak soever their Proofs were for *Purgatory*, their Motives thereto would be very strong; this Figment making all the rest of their *Frauds* take more certain effect with men, they being hereby affrighted into a facil and foolish good humour of parting with any thing, even to the impoverishing of themselves and their posterity, so that those may be satisfied who pretend they have the Keys of this prison of *Purgatory*, and may be persuaded either to excuse them from ever entering into it, or, if they must enter into it, to deliver them out of it as timely and speedily as may be.


But the grand *Mischief* of this cheating Invention is a blasphemous affront to the Merits and Satisfaction of our dear Saviour, and a Tyrannicall oppression of the consciences of the simple; but so great a scandal to the more nasute, that it were a strong temptation to them to misbelieve the whole summe of Religion, or any state at all of the Soul after death, but that she is mortal and perishes; these false Apostles having abused the belief of the Doctrine of her survival after the death of the Body so grossely and rancidly, merely to the advancing their own estates in this life, and to the wallowing in wealth, honour and sensual pleasures.

9. This is a competent Draught of the second Limb of *Antichristianism*, which consists *In the heaping together a number of troublesome and unwarrantable Superstitious conceits and observances*, whereby the yoke of Christ would be made far more grievous then the dispensation of *Moses*, yea whereby the Servitude of Christians would be little inferiour, if not greater, then the slavery of the *Israelites* in the Land of *Egypt* and in that house of bondage, as it is styled peculiarly in the Scripture. And therefore I think this particular constitution of things, which I have described, may very well goe for a considerable Member of *Antichristianism*.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

1. *The Positive Ends of the Gospel which the rest of the Limbs of Antichristianism do oppose.* 2. *That to lay claim to a Right of Infallible Interpretation of the Laws of Christ is a supplanting of his Kingly Office.* 3. *An instance of that danger in the Glosses of the Pharisees.* 4. *Several places of Scripture alledged to prove the Church Infallible.* 5. *The first general Answer to these Allegations, by demanding whether the Promise of Infallibility be to the Whole Church, or to Part.* 6. *The second, by demanding whether the Promise be Absolute, or Conditional.* 7. *A third, That the Promise cannot be Universal touching all Objects that may be considered.* 8. *A particular Answer to the first place of Scripture.* 9. *An Answer to the second and third.* 10. *Infallibility a Promise onely to the first Founders of the Christian Church.* 11. *What the meaning of The pillar and ground of truth.* 12. *A further exposition of that passage of Paul to Timothy.* 13. *That if understood of the Universal Church, it may be meant onely of it in the Apostles times.* 14. *And that the like may be said of the last allegation.*

I.  E have now done with those Members of Antichristianism that oppose the *Privative Ends* of the Gospel of Christ, which were, *The removing of Idolatry and the Burthen of Superstition out of the world*: we come now to the *Positive End* thereof, which in general is *The Advancement of the Divine Life*, and this either *Personally in Christ*, or *by way of propagation in his Members, the Church*. Those Divine Honours and Offices the Person of Christ is advanced to, and are most obvious to take notice of, are those of *King, Priest and Prophet*; the opposing or supplanting of which cannot but be so many abhorred parts of this wicked Antichristianism, whose Image we are now setting out in its genuine colours.

2. As concerning the first therefore of these, Suppose any man, or company of men, under pretence of being the true Visible Church successively descending from Christ and his Apostles, should take upon them to be the *Infallible Interpreters of the Law of Christ*, and teach that all men were to embrace and to submit to their Glosses, seem they never so harsh, never so improbable, nay, if you will, never so impossible, and declare it a mortal sin for any to doubt of their determinations in this kind: This surely were a plain opposing or utter supplanting of the

Kingly Office of Christ, and the quite taking away His exercise of *Sovereignty*, which cannot otherwise be exercised then by Commands and Decrees; which when a King has published, if another have power to interpret them any way, as he pleases, the *Kingly* power will really be in the *Interpreter*, and not in the *King*; I say, this pretended right and power of *Infallibly interpreting* does in very truth make the *Interpreter* King, and the *King* a Shadow or Cypher.

Assuredly no Earthly Prince would think himself truly Sovereign over his people, if all the Injunctions and Edicts he made were not to bear the easie, natural sense which he intends them in, but to be drawn to some other meaning by any exception, or evasion, or any forcible interpretation that some foreign Potentate should put upon them. Wherefore whosoever pretends a Right and *Infallibility* in the interpreting the Law of Christ, does in effect make Christ no Law-giver, and consequently no King nor Governour in his Church; then which what can be more grossly Antichristian?

3. *Cuius est interpretandi, huius Sententia pondus habet legis Divinae*, is a saying, which although * *Erasmus* has put into the mouth of a mean person, yet is a great Truth. And our Saviour knew, and has noted the mischievous abuse of this presumption so plainly in that instance of the *Pharisees*, (who could interpret away the force of that Command, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, by saying it was *Corban*) that it is impossible he should allow of any visible Interpreter with such an unlimited Right as some contend for, to the abuse of his Church, and the taking his *Kingly Office* out of his own hands. For he has there observed, That the *Pharisees had made the word of God of none effect through their Traditions*, that is to say, through their Exceptions, Qualifications and Interpretations of it.

Matth. 15. 6.

* Matth. 16.

* Joh. 14.

* Joh. 16.

* 1 Tim. 3. 15.

* chap. 4.

4. I but they will pretend that Christ will make his Church *Infallible*; and if they be so, he himself will really reign in them, they interpreting always according to his mind. And that he has made his Church *Infallible*, they will pretend to appear plainly out of such places of Scripture as these: * *That the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her*; and again, * *I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, which the World cannot receive, &c.* again, * *When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.* To which adde that of S. Paul to * *Timothy*, where he seems to call the Church *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*. And lastly, that to the * *Ephesians*, where Christ is said to have given some, *Apostles*, and some, *Prophets*, and other some, *Evangelists*, and other some, *Pastors and Teachers*, for the perfecting of the *Saints*, for the work of the *Ministry*, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.

Let

Let these passages then be their Letters patent, their grand pretended Commission of Infallibly interpreting, and never erring in any Determinations or Conclusions, and we shall easily discover that it is a mere pretence.

5. For I demand whether this Promise of *Infallibility* be to the *Whole* visible Church in succession, or *some part*. That it is not an *Absolute*, *Inconditionate* Promise to the *Whole* is plain, in that the parties of Christendom differ so much in matters of Belief as they do. But if it be to *some part*, where is the nomination of *that part* these Promises whereby their Right of Interpreting may appear to the world? There is no *Particular Church* specified there, neither *Greek* nor *Roman*, neither *Muscovian* nor *Armenian*, nor that of *Prester John*, nor any other Church else. Whence it is plain that no *Particular Church* can have any claim or right to any such privilege.

6. Again, suppose some *particular Church* had a Promise, how does it appear that the Promise is *Inconditionate* to this *Particular Church*, and that it is not upon supposal that they will seriously and sincerely apply their mind to find out the Truth, and purifie their Souls from all those worldly and sensual impediments thereto? For this spirit of *Infallibility* cannot lodge in a body that is subject unto sin: For Purity of heart and life is the very Light and Crystalline Organ, the very Eye of the Soul; and to think of a privilege of *Infallibility* without Holiness, is like the imagining of a promise to see without Light or Eyes.

Wherefore it is such an Hypocritical conceit, that a man cannot well tell whether it be more to be lamented or laughed at, for a Church to pretend that God has an irresistible design of making them *Infallible* to every Punctilio of Controversie, and yet not of making them *Holy* and *Good*. But it is a sign they contemn or abhor *Goodness* as being contrary to their corrupt natures; but desire the privilege of *Infallibility* as being agreeable to their natural pride, and the boast thereof an instrument to bring about all their deceitful devices. And therefore we might adde to this, That it is questionable whether the Promise be to any Church visible, but to such as the Apostles were, chosen, sanctified, and faithful Regenerate men; for none but these are truly the *Church of Christ*; and if he make his Promise good onely to such as are his true Church, it is sufficient.

7. Moreover, be this Promise *Conditionate* or *Inconditionate*, we cannot but be sure that this *Infallibility* is not *Universal* as to all Objects whatsoever. And therefore to meddle with such things as are not necessary to Salvation nor really edifying, were to go beyond their Warrant or Commission, and thereby to forfeit, or at least to have no benefit of, the promised Assistance.

8. But let us particularly examine the Texts of Scripture themselves. The first whereof infers no more then this, That the Church of Christ shall never cease to be, that Death shall never be able to prevail against her, neither to extirpate her in this world, or hinder her of a glorious Immortality in the world to come. For *οὐκ ἔσθ' ἡ θάνατος* signifies no more then *death*, or *abolition*, or *The state of the dead*. But this may be true of the Church, though it were not *Infallible*. So weak is this first Allegation.

9. As for the second, it were well for the Alledgers if it were onely weak; for it is strong against themselves, and makes much for our Hypothesis, who conceive this *Infallibility to be Conditional*. For reade the whole Context entire, and it runs thus, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments, and I will ask the Father, &c.* which implies there is a *Condition*, That *they must love Christ and keep his Commandments*, if they expect that Spirit which will abide with them *for ever*, (that is, as long as they lived; for so the word ordinarily signifies in Scripture.) And it is further added, that it is such a Spirit as *the World cannot receive*: Which therefore does strongly imply that it resides not in those who are worldly and carnally-minded. Which *Conditionality* of the Promise is also insinuated in the third place alledged, *When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will Lead you, or guide you, into all Truth*; that is, he will lead you as a Man, not hale you or drag you as a Stone, or a brute Beast, which is not a free Agent. So that we see plainly that this *Infallibility* is *Conditional* where-ever it is.

And though I doubt not but the *Condition* being performed, the *Promise* will be made good to all men as far as it is necessary to their Salvation; yet these places are not the best that may be produced to that purpose, the *Promise* being not *General* here, but directed to certain *particular* men in such circumstances, as it is evident that it is meant to them in particular, and does not infer any succession. For the men that he speaks to there he decyphers to be such as he was present with, and should be put in mind by the *Paraclet* what he had said to them when present; such as were sorrowful upon the occasion of his departure; with other like circumscribing circumstances that cannot belong to any succession of men, but were proper to the Apostles to whom he then spake.

10. As indeed *Infallibility* it self seems a Promise most proper to them, they being to lay the Foundations of the Church, and to build the House of God; which they having done in terms plain enough, as to all things necessary to Salvation, the Promise of *Infallibility* needs reach no further; the Church for ever hereafter being safe, provided she keep but close to what is plainly delivered by the first Founders of her, nothing else need be obtruded upon Believers by way of Infallible imposition.

11. And as for that fourth citation, where the Church seems to be called
 1 Tim. 3. 15. *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*: If we admit of *Cameron* and *Capellus* their ingenious conjecture upon the place, viz. That [*The Pillar and Ground of Truth*] is to be disjoyned from the precedent words, by a *Colon* at least; and understand also what follows [*without controversie great is the mystery of Godliness*] to be onely a Parenthetical *Elogium* of the Mystery of the Gospel, into which the Apostle was transported upon consideration of those weighty Points thereof which he was delivering, *God manifest in the Flesh, &c.* so that *The Pillar and Ground of Truth* may be the Preface to the grand Points of the Christian Truth, which, that Parenthesis being seposd, do immediately follow; according as it was usual with the *Jews* to prefix before such Fundamentals of knowledge the Title of *החכמה ועמוד יסוד*, *Fundamentum & Columna Sapientia*: this passage will be wholly disinabled from making any shew of proof for
 1 Tim. 3. 16. what it was alledged.

12. But

12. But if you will adjoyn this Title to the *Church*, it was the *Ephesian Church* where *Timothy* resided, which has vanished long agoe. And what other Church then, unless every *Particular Church*, can urge this place for *Infallibility*? which experience of contradicting one another does openly confute. Besides that the style it self of [*Ground and Pillar*] may not signifie certain performance, but the duty what they ought to perform. As when the Apostles are called the *Light of the world*, and the *Salt of the earth*, which onely signifies what they ought to be, not what they were necessitated to be. For those that ought to be thus, may notwithstanding hide their Talent, or grow unfavoury through their own fault, as it fared in *Judas*, and in all his succession of false Apostles, which call themselves the Servants, but are the betrayers, of the Lord *Jesus*. Matth. 5, 13, 14.

13. But lastly, Suppose that the *Church* then in general were here understood, it does not follow, That because that Primæval and Apostolical Church should by a peremptory design of Providence have engraven upon it or exhibit to the world as Articles of belief nothing but what was true, that the Church in succession should always doe the like. For there was a prime care taken that the first establishment of the Church should be in truth and solidity, but that being done, which was sufficient for the after-carrying on the affairs of the Church in a right way by free Agents, the success should afterwards lie upon their industry and fidelity, at least so far as that by no miraculous and supernatural force they should be assisted or driven on to keep things pure and intemperate. And that was sufficient for the Church, I think, which is thought sufficient for every particular man, namely, That the Christian Doctrines and Precepts being faithfully laid down in the Evangelists and other Writings of the Apostles, they might (that usual Grace of God which is not irresistible assisting them) frame their lives and beliefs accordingly in those things that are plain: And all are so that are necessary to Salvation. Which Rule if it had been kept to, no Error had crept into the Church to this very day.

14. Which last Answer will contribute something towards an Answer to the last place alledged; for it seems onely to contain a description of a special provision of God for the rightly setting his Truth in the first Ages of the Church. To which purpose he appointed not onely *Pastours* and *Teachers*, (which Functions continue still) but *Apostles* having a particular mission from Christ himself, who breathed into them the Spirit of Truth; as also *Prophets* and *Evangelists*, men in a special manner inspired and assisted to erect the Fabrick of the Church according to the will and purpose of Christ, who then in an extraordinary manner did supervise all by a miraculous assistance of his Spirit. And therefore whatever was wrote for the publick use of the Church, while any of those unto whom our Saviour Christ said that *the Spirit should abide with them for ever*, which should lead them into all Truth, were alive, or was approved by them, is really of certain and infallible authority; but whatever after Inventions or Super-additions there were in the Church, they are to be measured by this unerring Rule.

Eph. 4. 10.

These *unerring* Pastors therefore and Teachers, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, were not a promise to all Successions, but an extraordinary gift, as the Text it self imports, which Christ at that time, namely, at his solemn Coronation or Triumph ascending above all Heavens, that he might fill all things, cast down as a Royal Largefs upon his Church, for the speedy completement of her, for her growing up into the unity of the Faith and Knowledge of Christ, and that she might not be carried about with every wind of Doctrine, but adhere to that onely that was delivered by those Heavenly-inspired and miraculously-assisted Ministers of the Gospel. The acknowledgement whereof, I conceive, had been the onely sure means to keep the Church in Unity for ever; whenas the pretending to an *Infallibility* in the succeeding Church, where indeed it was not, and the taking upon them thereupon to impose things with equal authority to the Apostles themselves, would naturally prove the fountain of all Error, Schism and Confusion.

CHAP. II.

1. *That the safe conveyance of the Apostolick Writings down to us by the Church does not infer her Infallibility.* 2. *That the Plainness of Scripture in points necessary to Salvation takes away the want of an Infallible Judge.* 3. *That the Scripture not pointing to any Infallible Judge nor any faithful Keeper of Traditions, does ipso facto declare her self the onely sufficient Guide.* 4. *That there is not onely no want of an Infallible Judge, but better there should be none.* 5. *That the want of Infallibility does not take away the Authority of the Church, it being the duty of every person in things really disputable to compromise with her.* 6. *That though a Visible Judge be necessary in Civil causes, yet it is nothing so in Points of Religion.* 7. *That every private man has not onely a liberty, but a command, to judge for himself in matters of Faith.* 8. *The said Right or Privilege demonstrated also by Reason.* 9. *That the Reason or Judgment of every private man is not a private Spirit in that reproachful sense that some speak it.* 10. *That the claim to a right of judging for ones self in points of Faith does not make a man superiour to his Church,* 11. *Nor yet equal;* 12. *Nor implies that he thinks himself wiser then his Church, but rather more careful of his own eternal Concerns.* 13. *That it is not his private Wisdom he sticks to, but the Wisdom of God known to all that are not wilfully blind.* 14. *That the Church is not Infallible, proved from the Example of the Jewish Church.* 15. *That there is the same reason of the Christian.* 16. *That the want of an Infallible Interpreter is no such loss to the common people.* 17. *That their assurance of the truth of the Scriptures by the Spirit, is a Tenet not so superciliously to be exploded as some make shew of.* 18. *That this Spirit is properly the Spirit of Faith, distinguishable from that of Knowledge and Wisdom.* 19. *The notorious Fraud and excessive Mischief of this pretence of Infallibility.*
1. But

1. **B**UT being worsted thus in *Scripture* they will pretend Demonstrations in *Reason*, (upon the presumption they are the true visible Church, successively descended from Christ and his Apostles) that *Infallibility* is for ever intailed upon them.

As first, *That unless the Church were successively Infallible, we could have no certain and Infallible belief of the Holy Scriptures, which are avouched to be such by the Church.* But I briefly answer, That supposing this successive Church were a trusty & undoubted Conveyer of the Copies of the Holy Scriptures uncorrupted, yet it doth not follow that they must be *Infallible Interpreters* of these Scriptures; no more then the faithful conveyance of *Plato's* and *Aristotle's* Writings to all posterity implies that the Conveyers thereof are *Infallible Interpreters* of them. For they might preserve the Writings of either by a diligent comparing of Copies upon every transcription; besides that there might be a special watchfulness of Providence over these Holy Writings; for the conservation of them from any material blemishes, as being so exceeding necessary for the continuance of those Truths that were published by such men as (accordingly as I have already intimated) were Divinely and Infallibly inspired.

And that there were such Writings, sufficient for the conveyance of the knowledge of Christ, written by them that were infallible Witnesses of the Truth, and that we may be assured that those which commonly bear the Title of them are they, I have without any recourse to the *Infallibility of the Church* so plainly demonstrated in my *Explanation of the Mystery of Godliness*, that I think it needless to say any thing further of it in this place. Book 7. chap. 10 & 11.

2. In the second place they will pretend, *That the Church must be Infallible, or else there will want an Infallible Judge of Controversies; nay there will not be so much as any Authority in the Church to order the affairs thereof.* But the Answer is easie and brief; That there is no want of any such *Infallible Judge*, and therefore not of the Church's *Infallibility*; for the *Scripture* is a Sufficient Rule of Faith to all that have understanding, whether Learned or unlearned, in things necessary to Salvation: and That the belief and practice of these will carry a man to Heaven.

The Spirit of God therefore is the onely *Infallible Judge* here, and has declared as plainly as any successive Judges can, in those things that are necessary to Life and Salvation; what is to be believed and to be done: Which if we believe and practise in particular, and do also in general and implicitly believe and stand in a readiness to obey the rest of the *Scripture*, when the sense thereof appears to us, we are in a safe condition, and need not doubt but it will go well with us in the other State. For it is manifest that what is necessary, is plain in the Word of God to all men; otherwise Salvation were not sufficiently revealed to the world; and what we above recited out of *St. Paul* were not true, nor the Providence of God sufficiently watchful in the laying the first Foundations of his Church.

3. For if the *Scripture* were not a Sufficient Infallible evidence of all necessary

necessary Truths, God would have afterwards raised other persons of Apostolical purity in conversation, and with the like power of working Miracles, to have made a Supplement to the former, (which yet was never done;) or else those other necessary Truths, taught indeed by the first Apostles, but not written by them, had been committed to *Tradition*: which had been a very lubricous and perillous way, and unlikely to be taken by Divine Providence.

But if any such way had been taken, certainly the Scripture it self, in which all men are agreed, would have pointed it out to us, (as also if there had been any Interpreter instituted) that there might be infallibly communicated to us what remains necessary to our eternal safety. But the Scripture being silent herein, it openly declares it self to be Sufficient to all such as with sincerity and care apply themselves to the understanding of it: as certainly every man considering that his eternal Salvation lies upon it will be enforced to doe in his own behalf; whenas if others interpret for him, they may doe it more remissly or more fraudulently.

4. Besides that, it is a very unskillfull and inept desire that there should be any such *Infallible Fudge*, that has concluded all Controversies to our hands already. For that would prevent or forestall that privacy and peculiarity of converse which God has with those Souls that are more dear to him, who does in a special manner assure them of such Conclusions as are not to be reached at by every hand. But when the *Infallible Determination* of the Church has passed, all mens assurances will be alike, and God will have, as it were, given the staff out of his own hands. Wherefore there being no external *Infallible Fudge* for the Interpreting obscure places in Scripture, God's right of his dispensing his special favours is preserved, and men of a more devout and Intellectual spirit are divinely employed, and earnestly engaged to extraordinary piety and holiness, that they may win the favour of that inward Infallible Interpreter, even of that Holy Spirit, which the World cannot receive, and by the light of his assistance be enabled to reach the true sense of those Writings which himself dictated to the Apostles and other Holy men of God.

5. And lastly, *That the want of Infallibility will take away the Authority of the Church*, is a very weak Inference. For her Authority is entire in the urging those Truths and Duties in Scripture that are plain to all men, even to such as do not in the least dream that they are *Infallible*: And those that are thus plain are such as are the most useful for our safe conduct to Heaven. And for those Doctrines that be more obscure, if they be withall useful and edifying, as also Rites and Ceremonies, the Church has Authority, though she be not Infallible, to declare them and appoint them. *Let all things be done decently, and in order.* But how she is to behave her self to Dissenters, having spoke of that more copiously elsewhere, I shall not here so much as touch upon it.

1 Cor. 14. 40.

I will onely adde, That in things that are really disputable I conceive it is the duty of every one, whatever his private judgment and inclinations otherwise would be, to compromise with the Authority of the Church, and for Peace and Order sake to be concluded by their Determinations.

6. Now what has been already suggested will serve to null or enervate
a third

a third Sophism. For it seems a plausible Objection against the Scripture alone being sufficient to guide us and rule us without a publick Infallible Interpreter, *That this were as if one should command that the Law alone in Civil matters were sufficient without a publick Judge.* For besides what we above insinuated, That a *plain Law* (and such we averre the Scripture to be in matters necessary to Salvation) may want no Judge, where the Conscience finds it self upon pain of Damnation obliged to understand it aright; we further suggest, That the urging or pressing of the Law of Christ by a publick Minister, Interpreter, or Declarer of the sentence of his Law, so far as it is plainly his to all unprejudiced Understandings as well unlearned as learned, is not denied by those that contend that the Scripture is the sole Rule of Faith. And for my own part (as I said before) in places that are not thus plain, if such Interpretations be made as are not repugnant to other plain Texts of Scripture, but tend to the promotion of the Ends of the Gospel, which I have elsewhere specified, I hope no man shall offend God, but doe his dutie to the Church, in compromising with them in their sentiments of things in such circumstances as these. For they are supposed conscientiously and in the Fear of God to have interpreted the Scripture, and not for their own ends or carnal satisfaction in any thing. And questionless in this case they can shew their Commission, and that they act by Authority. *Let all things be done to edification.* 1 Cor. 14. 26.

But that, *because every Civil controversy must be determined by a Judge, therefore there must be an Infallible determinative Judge of all the nice and unprofitable controversies that emerge amongst Christians about Scripture and Religion,* is but a weak and lame Illation. For Civil controversies cannot be undecided without injury to some party: but no man is injured by not having those unprofitable, at least unnecessary, questions determined; for they may hold their several opinions without wronging one another, if they will but keep to that known Law of Christ, that Royal Law of Charity. Nay the deciding such controversies by a pretended Infallible Judge were a vast wrong to one party, it galling their consciences, and streightning their liberty, and making the way to Heaven narrower then Christ has made it. For so does this Infallible Judge that imposes his Determinations on men upon pain of eternal Damnation. But God of his infinite wisdom and mercy has not given the least Intimation for any such Usurpation. And therefore this *Infallible Judge* being not appointed by God, and being unappointable by man, the Scripture alone, and not these pretended Infallible decisions, must be the Rule of our belief.

7. The fourth and last pretence is, *That unless the Sense of Scripture be determined by the Infallibility of the Church, every private Spirit must be Judge of the meaning thereof; nay and, which is worse, be Judge of the Church, and thereby supersoun to the Church: then which nothing can be more wild and extravagant.*

This seems a big difficulty at first: But I answer, That every particular man should judge for himself; he has a *Commission* from the very Word of God, nay, I may say, a *Command*: As where he is bid to try *all* 1 Thess. 5. 21.

John 4. 1. all things, and to hold that which is good; as also, not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they be of God; and in another place, to be ready to give a reason of his Faith. The Bereans also are commended for searching the Scripture, and trying whether the things that Paul, even an inspired and chosen vessel of God, had taught them, were true or no. But for any one man or any company of men to be appointed by God Authoritatively and absolutely to be Judges for others in matters of Faith and Religion, we do not find any where in Scripture or Reason any such Commission given unto them; but we are rather admonished to take heed how we be led hoodwinkt by any, lest the blind leading the blind, both fall into the ditch.

1 Pet. 3.
Acts 17.
Matt. 15. 14.

8. But not Scripture onely, but Reason it self does plainly commiffionate private Spirits, as they call them, to judge for themselves. For these pretenders to Infallibility doe it onely upon the boast that they are the true successive Church from the Apostles: But unless they will be above all measure ridiculous, they must convince the Reason of him whom they would make a Proselyte to their Church, that their Church is that true and Apostolical one. For to say so without proof, is a madness to be hooted at by all men: But to goe about to prove it, is to appeal to the private Reason of him they would convince. And if he be a Christian already, though not of their Church, the common acknowledged Principles are the Holy Scriptures, in arguing from which the Disputant appeals to him he would bring over, if his Interpretation or Allegation of them be not true. But if he be an Infidel or Pagan, he is to use Reasons to prove the Truth and Authority of the Scriptures themselves: Which is still an appeal to the conscience of him that is to be gained to the Church, whether what is offered to him be true or false. And that which is offered to him being the whole Christian Faith, (for that is it which makes a true Church) it is plain that his Reason and Conscience is appealed unto, whether the whole Summe of the Credenda in Christianity is not true. That is to say, Though the Church, and he that argues in the behalf of the Church, have already judged and firmly concluded that the Christian Faith is a true Faith in the whole and in every part, and make no appeal from their own judgment in reference to themselves; yet in reference to the party they would convince, they appeal to him if the grounds of their Belief be not solid, and so imply and acknowledge that he is Judge for himself in these affairs, call that in him a private spirit or what you please.

9. But I do not know but it may be too reproachfully called a private spirit, at least in the sincere and simple-hearted, who have no private designs but to know the Will of God and to doe it, and it is the Will of God all men should doe so, and the spirit of man * is said to be the Lamp of the Lord; and that which judges according to the κοινὰ ἑννοιαί, the common notions of Reason in all men, and has not lost the * ταῖς ἀνεκδοκίαις δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων, those common characters and ingenuous sentiments of Indispensable Truth and Morality which the Father of lights has of old sealed upon the Soul, and which are hardly obliterated quite in any, and are necessarily continued, and that vigourously, in the sincere; I say, such a Life or Spirit as this judging in a man is very hardly to be called a private

* Prov. 20.

* Psell. περὶ
θεογνωσίας δὲ
μόνον.

ivate spirit, it judging according to the *Universal sense of humane Nature*, and so as every one judges when he is unbiassed. Nay, if this will not serve, I say that the Judgement which is thus made is the Judgement of that *Universal King and Law-giver*, the *Eternal Son of God*; it is his sentence in these cases, but writ in the tables of our hearts, and pronounced by our mouths as by the *Præco* of a Court. So far is it from being the Judgement of a mere *private spirit*.

But that rather is the Judgement of a *private spirit*, though it should bear the Title of an *Infallible Church*, which is decreed not according to the plain Texts of Scripture, so as all unprejudiced men would certainly understand them, nor according to those indeleble Characters of Truth which Christ the *Eternal Logos* has writ in the Rational Souls of all mankind; but according to partial Interest and depraved desires. The sentence of Thousands, nay of Millions, of such Judges is more the verdict of a *private spirit*, then the Judgement of the meanest *private* man that pronounces from such Principles as I have declared.

10. Now for that odious imputation of *making a mans self Superiour to the Church*, by *laying claim to a Judgement of discretion*; I say, he lays claim to no more then is of necessity given him, as I have already demonstrated. For if there be an appeal to the *Reason and Conscience* of a *private man* in the endeavouring to convince him, he is *ipso facto* made Judge; and if to be *Judge* in this sense is to be *Superiour*, he is necessarily *Superiour*. But I see no necessity that his being *Judge* thus for himself makes him *Superiour* to his Church. Indeed if he judged for his Church, he were thereby their *Superiour*; but judging for himself only, he usurps no *Superiority* over the Church; but only is obedient to him that is *Superiour* to both; that is, to *Jesus Christ*, following his plain Injunctions and Precepts, whether, written in the outward Word, or legibly engraven upon the Table of his Heart. To follow therefore the plain and inevitable dictates of his own Conscience, which is the Tribunal of God, is not to exalt a mans self above the Church, but to submit a mans self to God, and exalt him above all.

11. Nor does a man herein *equallize himself to his Church*; in that he does not define for others, but for himself, and professes himself in the mean time ready to obey the visible Church in such things as are not repugnant to the expresse Precepts of God and Christ, and to those immutable Characters of Truth which he has imprinted upon the Souls of all men, and which are there to be found, unless gross violence and Interest has obscured or obliterated them.

12. Nor (in the last place) does he *make himself wiser then his Church*; which were also an odious imputation; But without immodesty it may be thought that a private man may be more solicitous of his own important Concerns, and more faithfull to his own *Eternal Interest*, then many thousand men put together; and that therefore though he may not have so much wit and learning as these, yet he may conduct his own affairs more safely then if they were put into their hands; especially they that pretend to be guides to Heaven for others, seeming to be wholly taken up with the things of this World; as if they had forgot their intended journey.

Mat. 11.

It is not therefore a boast of *Wisdom above the Church*, but a careful solicitude touching such things as the wise men of the World do not usually trouble themselves much about, that may embolden some private sincere-hearted Christian to dissent from some Dictates of the Church, professing himself in other things as weak and childish as they please; remembering that Doxologie of our Blessed Saviour, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

13. Finally, This *Wisdom* which they adhere to is plainly and evidently not the Dictate of their own *private spirit* (which to oppose to the Church, were indeed to make a mans self wiser then the Church) but the plain and perspicuous Testimonies of the Word of God, and the common and indubitable Notions of universal humane Nature, writ by the Finger of that Eternal Wisdom which created all things, on the spirits of all men that be in their wits, and therefore is a plain and legible Copy of that Wisdom: So that he that adheres thereto does not prefer his own Wisdom before the Wisdom of the Church, but submits himself faithfully to the Wisdom of God, to which the Church also ought to submit, and not to efface, as much as in them lies, those imprinted Characters of Truth out of the Souls of men, thereby to enslave them to themselves and to the corrupt Interest of their Kingdom of darkness and gross Imposture.

14. But I have been more copious then was needfull or intended in confuting this dream of *Infallibility*. We might have made shorter work of it, and suddenly evinced the folly of that pretence, by actual Errours that have been in the Church of God. As surely *the Church of the Jews* was as really the Church of God as the visible *Christian Church*, and has as magnificent promises as it, in *Isaiah*. For what is spoke Chap. 54. rebounds upon the Church of the *Jews* first, *Grotius* has observed; and there it is said, That *they shall all be taught of God*, and that *with everlasting kindness God will have mercy upon them*: And yet this Church was in so gross a mistake, that the Governours and Grandees thereof knew not their *Messiah* when he was come into the world, but put him to a most shamefull death.

But even in those times when there was a more palpable Residence of God's miraculous power with them, they erred very hainously; as in the worshipping the Golden Calf in the wilderness, as also in the ten Tribes worshipping those in *Bethel*, nay apostatizing all to the worshipping of *Baalim*, saving seven Thousand, which were so few in respect of the rest, that *Elijah* took himself to be left alone. And *Ahab* consulting the Prophets, found by wofull experience that four hundred of them prophesied false, and onely *Micaiah* true. And * *Jeremie* complains of his times; *A wonderfull and horrible thing, saith he, is committed in the Land, The Prophets prophesy falsely, and the Priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will you doe in the end thereof?*

* Ch. 5. 30, 31.

* Ch. 7. 4.

That is also a smart monition of his, * *Trust you not in lying words, saying,*

saying, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, &c.* For all which they doe that call themselves *The Temple of the Lord* is not right, as appears in the same Chapter, where they are accused of committing Idolatry openly in the Cities of *Judah* and in the streets of *Jerusalem*; which could not be, had they not fallen into the hands of blind and erroneous Guides, which might cause them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, and yet in the mean time take up that presumptuous boast, *That the Law shall not perish from the Priest, nor the Counsel from the Wise, nor the Word from the Prophet*, no not then when they were imagining mischief against the true Prophets of the Lord, as you may see *Jeremie* 18.

But *Micaiah* says plainly, *That the Prophets that are onely for ease* * Ch. 3. 6. *times and for good cheer, Night shall be upon them, and they shall have no vision; and it shall be dark unto them, that they cannot divine. That such Seers shall be ashamed, and Diviners confounded, as having no answer from God.* And * *Esay* complains that the *watch-men* of the City are *blind*, that they are *ignorant shepherds, that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for jollity or gain.* Thus clear is it that the Church of the *Jews*, though it was in such a special manner espoused to God, was not secure from, but did actually fall into very great Errors.

15.1 And the *Christian Church* has no greater assurance, but if Avarice, Pride and Sensuality seize upon the Guides thereof, she may also fall into as great errors and blindnesses. The Apostle saith, *Let him that stands, take heed lest he fall.* * Cor. 16. 12. And it might have been a reasonable warning to the Church of Christ betimes, which was not onely tottering, but almost universally lapsed into that over-spreading Heresy of *Arianism*, to reflect upon herself, that while she does stand, she stands upon her good behaviour; and that she is not so Infallibly wise, but that she may be surpris'd with Error, and over-run therewith, unless true and unfeigned Holiness clear her eyes, and keep her from being benighted in such mists of darkness.

And truly if she was above twelve hundred years agoe so obnoxious to Error, it is high time for her to awake and consider if after so many Ages of ease and wealth and honour and affluency of all things, she has not grown fat and kicked, and cast the Commandments of God behind her back, and brought in a mere carnal Law of her own devising, more suitable to the will of the flesh and to the carrying on of her own worldly Interest. But it is sufficient in this place to have demonstrated *She may erre, in what she has erred* to define, is beyond the scope of my present discourse.

16. We have fully defeated that Figment of pretended *Infallibility*, whose downfall our opposers have no colour to bewail, unless in the behalf of the common people, who are illiterate, as if they would hereby be made incapable of any certainty of Belief, and consequently of Salvation, by reason they have no Infallible grounds to build on, this of the Church being taken away.

But they may remember that we have already acknowledged sufficient

certainly in that which the *Universal Church* agrees in, and has agreed in in all Ages, and that is the *Scripture*. Such an *Universal Tradition* as the *Scripture* has is acknowledged a firm Foundation, which the Church may be unfailing conveyers of down to posterity without being *infallible Interpreters* thereof. The unfailingness of which conveyance notwithstanding, I must confess, may be a more intricate business than what every Vulgar man can make out to himself; though infinitely less hard than to prove That the *Church* that would appropriate him to their Community is *Infallible*.

* Cal. Secund.
Curio against
Floribellus.

Nay, I must confess, I do not know how it were possible that a Church should so much as prove it self a Church, much less an *Infallible* Church, without the *Scripture*. And therefore the belief of the *Scripture* seems to be the most immediate of all, as * he says well, *Nam qui de fide & authoritate Divinarum Scripturarum dubitat, quomodo, quaso, credet Ecclesie, quæ nullam habet sine eadem Scriptura auctoritatem?*

John 6. &
ch. 10.

17. And therefore I cannot explode that by any means which is so superciliously derided by some, namely, *That it is the Spirit of God that does assure us of the Truth of Scriptures more than anything else whatsoever*. For our Saviour Christ saith, *None cometh to me but whom my Father draweth. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me*. Wherefore there is a *discerning Spirit* in those that appertain to Salvation, whether it be the Voice of God and Christ or no. For the true *Shepherd* goeth before, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice; but they follow not a stranger, but flee from him, because they know not his voice; as our Saviour discourses most excellently. I say therefore, the *Voice*, the *Call*, or *Whistle* (if you will) of the true Shepherd are the *Holy Scriptures*, which by an immediate sense they are assured to be the *Call* of the Shepherd, and are at this day to them that belong to the election of God, as the Voice of Christ and his Apostles when they were upon Earth, the power of whose speech assisted by the Spirit did lead men captive into that Faith that worketh Salvation.

John 10. 4, 5.

And without all question the same Word of Salvation still, which is in those Holy Records, seriously and zealously urged by men of a sincere faith and upright belief, without any mingling of it with humane devices, will have the same effect upon the multitude, and as many as are fitted will be wone to an unshaken belief of the Truth of Christianity, as it is exhibited to us in the Holy Scriptures. For they of themselves have the light and life and very breath of Christ and his Apostles wrapt up in them, to the exciting the vulgar sort to a firm and lively Faith, though many subtil Sophisters of the Kingdom of darkness might by crafty and perverse Reasoning intangle them and non-plus them in outward discourse. And therefore they are kept safe in the belief of the *Scripture* by the power of that Spirit in them, in virtue whereof there is that indissoluble harmonie and concord betwixt their spirits and the *Scripture*, though they cannot defend themselves by humane Literature, nor by the acuteness of Reason and depths of Philosophy.

18. Which *Spirit* residing in them, and giving them this solid and firm discernment betwixt the Testimonie of God and the Traditions and Doctrines

Doctrines of men, I think I may safely and properly call the *Spirit of Faith*, as it is considered nakedly in it self, and separate from the *Spirit of Knowledge and of Wisdom*. Which distinction of σοφία, γνῶσις and πίστις, Origen of old has taken notice of in his book against *Celsus*, Lib. 6. upon that Text of S. Paul. And truly I think the Gloss is marvellous solid; namely, That the chiefest and greatest Gift of the Spirit is that Divine *Wisdom*, whereby a man is in a great measure able to comprehend the reasons and more deep Philosophical grounds of the Truth of the Christian Mystery: The next is *Knowledge*, suppose of Antiquity, History, the comparing of Prophecies, and helps of the exterior humane literature, the liberal Arts and Languages: The third is *Faith*, which is also comprised in the other, but is a Gift which is as well general as more necessary, whose nature is such as I have described already; namely, *An immediate adherence to the word of Truth comprised in the Scripture, through the power of that Spirit that resides in sincere and well-meaning Souls, that have a savoury and sensible fear of God, and are ready to goe where he calls them.* For these by an ineffable Sympathy of their hearts with the veracity of the voice of Christ sounding in the Scriptures will be sure to follow their true Shepherd's call; though they turn off from the voice of the stranger and Hireling, who comes not into the Sheep-fold but to rob and kill and steal.

Whence we further see, that this pretended *Infallibility* of the Church in reference to the Scripture is as well *useless* as *false*; and much as if the Moon should take upon her to witness for the Sun that he sends out light; which every one that is not blind will necessarily see, though the Moon were under the Horizon. So the holy-children of God, chosen and faithful, will feel and tast, clearly see and discern that the Scripture is the Truth of God by that light which is in it; that correspondeth with that Spirit derived from the Father of lights which he has shed into their hearts: Which, as I said, is the *Spirit of Faith*, and the sure portion of every Member of Christ, whether they can make out things by *Knowledge and deep Reason* or no. And if they be assaulted by Cavillers, it is their prudence to send such to their fellow-members to whom God has given also the *Spirit of Knowledge* or of *Wisdom*: or it may be more prudent to let them goe as they came, they being not worthy to give any the trouble of discourse, who put questions not with design of being seriously edified and instructed in the Truth, but for captiousness, contention and a conceited hope of puzzling him by whom they make shew as if they desired to be informed.

19. The *fraudulent End* that this pseudo-Christian Church might drive at in this peremptory boast of *Infallibility* is very conspicuous, as also the *Mischievous events* thereof. For what could this tend to but the making this Antichristian power absolute, that they might, without any ones whinching, decree and declare what-ever would tend to the encrease of their own honour and wealth, seem it never so contrary to common Reason, to the express Word of God and the Precepts of Christ? For the sentence is Infallible, let it look never so strangely and repugnantly to any Rule that we might think right.

Wherefore this Power might even doe what it pleases, change Times and Laws, even the Law of God it self, and fling the house of God out at windows, as the proverb is. For who has any thing to say against that power which he is already persuaded is *Infallible*? And to speak summarily, and then which nothing greater can be said, The Admittance of this *Infallibility* is the Exclusion of Christ from his Kingdom and Throne, and the setting up a mere Mortal, a masterless Man of sin, or a pack of sons of *Belial*, to sway his Sceptre for him in the world. This alone is enough, if it would take, to supplant the Government of Christ upon Earth.

CHAP. III.

1. *That the keeping the Law of Christ in an unknown Tongue is an undermining or opposing of his Sovereignty.* 2. *As also the reproaching and vilifying his Law.* 3. *Their fraudulent pretence of hiding the Scriptures, with a vindication of their Usefulness and Excellency.* 4. *The vilifying of the Laws of Christ, by setting far less penalties upon the transgression of them then of the inconsiderable Institutes of the Church.* 5. *That their rigid Impositions are against the Kingdom of Christ; as also the reading of Legends instead of his Law, in Churches.* 6. *The dispensing also with the Divine Laws: The Fraud and Mischief thereof.* 7. *The Treasonable pretence of this Power's being absolute by right of succession in Christ's seat.* 8. *The evil effect of this pretence discoverable in several Institutes contrary to the written Laws of Christ:* 9. *As also in nulling those Laws he has given, as he is the Eternal Word.* 10. *The bloody opposing the Sovereignty and Kingdom of Christ in murdering his faithfull Subjects.*

1. **B**UT there are other ways also of lifting the Government from off Christ's shoulders. As first, Suppose *They should keep the Law of God in an unknown Tongue*, and not let any one read it in the language they understood: nay be so carefull that the very *Prayers* that are used in publick, and the celebration of the holy Eucharist, should be *unintelligible*, lest the power of some passages of Scripture that may occur in the publick Service should unhinge men from the blind obedience they are held in under this Antichristian Usurpation.

2. To which you may adde, what indeed might better have preceded, a *Revilement of the Law of Christ*, as a *Book full of nothing but dangerous obscurities*, a *Lesbian or Lenden Rule to be bended any way*, a *Nose of wax*, a *dead letter*, a *Farrago of casuall or occasionall Writings*, which were penned not by any Divine appointment, but onely as fortuitous Exigences moved the Prophets or Apostles to write them: And where they would speak most modestly, to say it is an *insufficient Law or Rule*, and therefore must be made up by Institutes of their own invention, or what they will please to obtrude upon the world for *Traditional doctrines* and

and usages. I say, thus to *Revile the Lam of Christ* is to null it, and thereby to null his Sovereignty over his Church, and to betray it into the hands of a stranger, to deal with them as he pleases, and to change Times and Laws and Customes in such sort, that there may be nothing found left in Christianity, that may any way thwart the Interest of these Usurpers.

3. In brief therefore thus it may be, They may pretend the Scripture obscure all over, because it is so in some places. But we have already sufficiently urged that there is enough clear of it to enlighten the single-hearted in the way of eternal Salvation. But upon the pretence of the uncertain sense of some passages, they may remove all away, that those passages that would plainly discover and reprove their false doctrines and practices might not come into the sight of the people. For (as a Father has well noted) *Verbum Dei est Lucerna, ad quam fur deprehenditur*; and our Saviour Christ of old, *They hate the light, because their deeds are evil.*

But that Imputation of the Scripture's being writ occasionally, it is as weak as impious and blasphemous. As if the Spirit of God would not assist the Apostles most when occasion called for it; or as if he were to study how to inspire them and illuminate them, and could not doe it *extempore*, or upon emergent occasions, but would be taken unprovided. These things favour of gross carnality and ignorance of the very nature of God and his holy Spirit, which Christ promised should not fail to be with them for ever, for the right settling of the affairs of the Church; that is to say, that it would not desert them so long as they lived, and acted in the Ministry and service thereof: Which therefore must make the Scripture very precious and of inestimable value to all sincere Believers.

Wherefore any one Paragraph of the Epistles of S. Paul, to whom Christ appeared, and called to from Heaven, and commissioned to be an Apostle, to lay the Foundation and first structure of his Church, ought to be preferred before many thousands of pretended Infallible Councils, who could never shew any such extraordinary Commission to prove themselves *Infallible*. For God by that miraculous appearing to Paul from Heaven, and so appointing him to be an Apostle, did proclaim to all the World that he would infallibly assist him; and that therefore what was imparted to the World by him should be a Law irreversible to Christendom. Whence the nulling of the Authority of S. Paul's writings were the abrogating of the very Law of Christ, which were a most rebellious and blasphemous Enterprise against the Sovereignty of Christ himself.

4. But there is also another way of undermining or subverting the Rule and Sovereignty of the Son of God, and that is, *An undervaluing his Laws in proportion of Penalties laid upon the transgression of them and of some slighter humane Ecclesiastick Institutions*. As surely these would be very Antichristian Instances of this kind, namely, If Absolution for him that kills his Father, or lies with his Mother, should be five or six times Cheaper than of him that takes two Orders in one day, or is

Ordained without Letters dismissory: or that to be Ordained out of the set times of the year should have a penalty ten times greater then Lying with a mans own Mother, or, if you will, but equal to the deflouring of a Virgin, the lying with a mans own Sister, Murther, Perjury, Sacrilege, Simonie, revealing Confession, keeping a Concubine, lying with a woman in the Church; but equal, I say, to all these nine put together. What could vilifie the indispenfable Law of God and Christ more, then to make so many transgressions, and so hainous, less then that trifle of humane Tradition, *To Ordain onely at such times of the year?*

5. Again, That were likewise a very conspicuous *vilification of the Word of God*, if instead thereof there were read in the Churches finely-devised *Fables* to entertain the People withall. As if they were wiser then the Wisdom of God himself, and could entertain the people more edifyingly with incredible and ridiculous stories, then with the Discourses of Christ *Jesus*, and sober and easily-intelligible histories of truth, that Divine Providence has recorded for the instruction of his Church.

Matt. 5.

6. *Dispensations* also against the *Law of Christ*, whether written in the Word of God, or comprised in the sacred Law of Nature, which is but the Transcript of that Law in the Eternal *Logos*, Christ according to his Divinity, were also an Antichristian defeating of Christ's Rule and Sovereignty: as also would be the Interpretation of the serious Injunctions of Christ as if they were not *Præcepta*, but *Consilia*, not *Commands*, but *Advice* left to us to follow if we would, or to let alone if we pleased; whenas Christ plainly declares, that *he that breaks the least of these Commandments, and teaches men so to doe, shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven*. What then would it be to dispense with *Perjury*, *Treason*, *Murther*, *Incest*, *Adultery*, *Sodomie* and other such hainous crimes? What were it but the utter taking away the Law of Christ, and destroying his Kingdom upon Earth?

The *Fraud* and *Self-endedness* of which easy Anarchy is onely to fill the net full, though it be of rotten sticks and durt, so long as, out of this durt they can extract Silver. But the *Mischief* is, that the Riches of this false Church would flow and rise with the height of the Abominations and Transgressions of rich finners, till a deluge of wrath wash away this deluge of sin. But those in the interim that are so foolish to believe these *Dispensations*, and think they are come into a fair liberty of spirit, having found so facil ghostly Fathers, will thereby most certainly become the Bond-slaves of sin, which in the conclusion will as certainly deliver them up to Eternal Death.

7. But what plea or pretence, will you say, may there be made of acting Religiously, while they act thus enormously, in letting the raines loose to all manner of wickedness to them that will goe to the price thereof? Why yes. This Antichristian Power might pretend that all that Power which is in Christ (though it be plainly a casting Christ out of his Royall Throne) is derived upon him or them as his Successours. But Christ being the absolutely-Supreme Power may doe as he will, dispense with his own Laws as he pleases: Wherefore this Antichristian power, pretending to be or have the very same power, may dispense with the Laws

Laws of Christ as it pleases, especially for the entieing the Church; for all such Interest is plous. Which yet is such an Imagination, that nothing can be more Treasonable against the Regal Office of Christ, nor more destructive of his Kingdom.

8. The effect of which villanous Principle would also certainly appear in this Synagogue of Satan or Antichrist, and we should find Laws and Institutes quite contrary to the Laws and Decrees of the Son of God. As certainly such as these would be; namely, Sundry sorts of Idolatry, such as I have instanced in already, and need not repeat, and have noted the Frauds and fetches in the practice of them; *The teaching for Doctrines the commandments of men*, which is expressly against our Saviour's own command, and of which I have given sundry examples in my * second branch of Antichristianism; *The with-holding the Cup from the Laity*, notwithstanding the Institution of the Lord's Supper by Christ himself does so plainly injoyne the communicating both of Bread and Wine, *Drink you all of this*; and S. Paul again, following the Example of Christ, *Let a man examine himself, and so eat of this bread, and drink of this cup*: which indefinite command surely includes all. But *the drinking of the Cup* being made the Privilege of the Priest, it magnifies his condition hugely, and makes the poor Laity feel and acknowledge their distance, how unholy and how removed from God they are in comparison of the Priesthood. This would be the true Reason, though they might pretend (for I think they have nothing better to pretend) the length of the Lay-mens beards; which I suppose they would rather cut off, then be cut short in their share of so holy a Sacrament.

Book I. ch. 12.

* Book I. ch. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Matt. 26. 27.

1 Cor. 11. 28.

Again, *The serving of God in the Church in an unknown Language, praying to him, and praising him, and reading the Scripture in a Tongue the people understand not*, is evidently against the directions of S. Paul in this particular, and against that more universal and indispensable Law, *Let all things be done to edifying*. As also *the worshipping of Angels*, which the same Apostle does expressly speak against; and likewise *the forbidding to marry, and the abstaining from meats* upon a Religious account, with several other such. All which being expressly against the Commands or Laws of Christ, it were a most reproachfull and Traitorous affront to him, the true Head of the Church, and a plain declaring against the Right of his Sovereignty, thus to make any Laws or Institutes so contrary to those himself has established.

1 Cor. 14.

1 Cor. 14. 26. Coloss. 2. 18.

1 Tim. 4. 3.

9. As were also *the nulling at any time what-ever binds according to the Universally-known Laws of God and Nature*: For these are the Laws of Christ, as he is the Eternal Logos. And therefore where any are bound by solemn Oath in publick Contracts or Covenants lawfully taken, or are legitimately married, and have committed no offence that might void the bonds of Wedlock; to pretend to have a power to dispense with or to null these Contracts and Oaths, or to legitimate such Marriages as are contrary to the Laws of God and Nature, This also would certainly be a manifest affronting the Sovereignty of Christ, and the Power thus practising would discover it self plainly Antichristian.

10. And lastly, to fill up the measure of this abhorred Limb of Antichrist which we are depainging; If this pretended infallible Power should

commit

commit cruel slaughters and massacres upon the true Subjects of Christ, such as are innocent and guiltless of any wrong against any man according to the Law of God and Nature, but are (as I said) really the true subjects of Christ; were not this practice palpably Antichristian? Which sentence against them would be very hard, if it should run but thus, *Let them be put to death without mercy, though they be the true Subjects of Christ Jesus.*

How Devillishly Antichristian then must that Act be that condemns them to death for that very thing that makes them *the true Subjects of Jesus Christ*, that is to say, because they faithfully adhere to the indispensable Laws of their Lord and Master? And in what a state of manifest Hostility against Christ's true and faithful Subjects must this Power be, that so professes and practises, that if they could find out any of them, and that if it lay in their power to destroy them, they would root them from off the face of the earth, or attempt to subdue them by all imaginable penalties and cruelties, by imprisonments, tortures, fire and faggot, and what not? And all this (which makes the crime infinitely more execrable) under a pretence of doing *service to Christ Jesus*, whose dearest and sincerest Members they thus barbarously persecute and destroy.

This one Limb alone of *Antichristianism*, I mean this *vast and bloody Treason against the holy Majesty of Christ and his true and living Members*, has such a weight of wickedness with it, that it is even enough of it self to make almost an entire *Antichrist*.

CHAP. IV.

1. *Sundry particular Oppositions against the Prophetick Office of Christ, which may be the Characters of that grand Pseudo-prophet that was to come into the world.*
2. *That the Spirit of Prophecy is not to be monopolized by any one person, but is free.*
3. *An Excerpt out of Cælius Secundus Curio to that purpose.*
4. *The silencing the Dictates of those common Notions implanted in humane Souls, the highest affront to the Prophetick Office of Christ that can be.*
5. *Several Absurdities propounded as Instances of that Tyranny over the immutable Principles of humane Understanding, with the detection of that eminent False-prophet thereby.*
6. *That it is infinitely more likely that this pretended Prophet should be fallible, then the fore-going Absurdities true.*
7. *That the slaying of the Prophets,*
8. *Together with the above-mentioned Oppositions against the Prophetical Office of Christ, make up a conspicuous Limb of Antichristianism.*

1. **B**UT we will further consider this *Antichristian* Opposition in respect to Christ's *Prophetical Office*. Where we shall dispatch very briefly, several of those practices against the *Kingly Office* of Christ equally reflecting upon his *Prophetical*. As first, The pretending the holy Oracles of God are so obscure that the people can make nothing of them, and then

then upon that pretence violently with-holding them from them, upon pain of death not to meddle with them against the mind of the Church: This would make Christ a Prophet without Predictions or Instructions, as I have noted above; which therefore would be a grand injury to him, as he is that great Prophet of God sent into the world. The prohibiting also the Reading of such Expositions of Scriptures as are writ by plain and sincere followers of Christ, who have interpreted with skill and faithfulness the more useful places of Holy Writ: This also would be an Antichristian resistance of him in his Prophetick Office; but that the utter stifling of the *Spirit of Prophecy* in his true Members, if they could persuade them that there is already an *Infallible* Prophet and Interpreter, whose sole meaning is the true sense of the Scripture, and that Scripture it self is nothing without it, and that none has either Authority or Capacity to interpret but he.

What an egregious *Pseudo-prophet* then, think you, would this be, who takes upon him to speak nothing but Oracles and Infallible truth, while he speaks and defines and acts such things as I have hitherto described, *Multifarious Idolatries, Insupportable Superstitions, and most impudent Annulments of the plain and expresse Laws and Doctrines of Christ?* Who therefore ever can, if this great Pseudo-prophet do not, prove the famed Antichrist indeed, that monopolizes the Right of Prophesying to himself alone, that he may the better deceive the whole world, and will be *Infallible*, that is to say, *unfailingly inspired*; that this extravagant boast may the more palpably discover him to be that eminent *False-prophet* that Christendom has so long expected and feared?

2. Such a pretended Monopoly of the *power of Prophesying* as this is diametrically opposite to that liberty of the Spirit of Prophecy which is the Gift of Christ the Eternal Wisdom of God, which is excluded nowhere but out of a wicked and polluted heart, out of every Soul that is subject unto sin: otherwise that Spirit is so described in the *Book of Wisdom*, that it is not in the power of any Potentate to confine it to himself.

For it is a lover of that which is good, quick, which cannot be letted or hindred, ready to do good, kind to man, steadfast, sure, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure and subtil Spirits. For Wisdom is more moving then any motion; she passeth and goes through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty: therefore can no defiled thing touch her. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the Image of his goodness: And being but one she can doe all things, and remaining in her self she maketh all things new; and in all Ages entring into holy Souls she makes them friends of God and Prophets. Chap. 7. v. 22, &c.

What one man therefore or company of men can pretend that the Gift of Prophesying is ensailed on them onely, unless they were the onely pure and undefiled? Or rather what ground or assurance have they that themselves can prophesy aright, they living in sin, in luxury and in all worldly impurities?

3. It is nobly concluded of *Calpurnius Secundus Curio* against *Floribellus*:
Neque

Neque enim vera Dei cognitio, verusque cultus, unius aut Familia, aut Gentis, aut Secta propriaesse potest; sed quicumque sensu immortalitatis tanguntur, ii ad se eandem pertinere existimare debent. Poterat quidem Fudaorum Gens Circumcisionem externam, Aaronis Familia Sacerdotium, alias ite Ceremonias sibi jure quodam vindicare; sed divinam & internam Circumcisionem, vivas illas animi verasque Hostias, aternas Naturae leges, quas in hominum animis Fova Opt. Max. à principio insculperat, omnium mortalium sententiis comprobatas, sibi nec Fudai, nec Graci, nec Romani, nec ulla præterea Natio, quasi propria vindicare potuerunt.

And immediately after speaking more particularly of Christian Religion as it is revealed in the Scripture, *Ac nè illud quidem verè dici potest, quod quidam putant, summam Religionis quasi Hæreditariam ad unum aliquem venisse, sic ut pro libidine sua interpretari, addere, demere, mutare, statuere, abrogare aliquid in ea possit. Neque enim idcirco Leges divinitus latae sunt, Religiove patefacta, quò in eam mortales jus haberent; sed ut omni studio, curâ, labore, diligentia colerent, ejusque dignitatem tuerentur.*

4. Wherefore as concerning those Eternal and Immutable Rules of Divine Reason which God has engraven upon every mans Spirit, and come in as freely as the Light of the Sun into their natural eyes, and without which what-ever Prophecies there are or Instructions in the Holy Writ, it were impossible for us to be ascertained of the Truth of them, or indeed of any meaning in them; I say, upon pretence of an imperious Infallibility to deface these Divine Characters of the Soul, or to command them silence, or to give them the Lie, would be an act of the most notorious *False-prophet*, and most contradictory to the *Prophetick Office* of Christ, (whether you respect his Humanity, or Divinity) that can ever manifest himself in the world.

5. As for example, If this impudent Oracle should declare, "That one
"and the same individual Body can be in several places at one and the same
"moment of time, yea in infinite places, in a manner, and at vast distances
"at once; That that may be made or created which is already in being;
"That the real and sensible mode of a Subject may subsist separate from
"that Subject, as, suppose, Motion or Hardness, where there is nothing
"moved or hard; That what we have assurance of by all our Senses
"and by the Senses of all men constantly, the Object being at a due distance,
"and the *Medium* fitted, and the Organs rightly disposed, may
"notwithstanding all this be false; That the same Body at the same time
"may be bigger and lesser then it self; but an inch distant from me, and
"a thousand miles distant from me, at once; That one and the same person
"may be many thousand miles absent from himself, and that he may
"both sit still and make a journey to himself at the same time; That an
"entire organized Body may be wholly in every part thereof, all of it in
"the Eye, and consequently every part in every part, the comely parts in
"those on which Nature has bestowed less comeliness; That an entire
"Body may be divided, and yet not into two parts (suppose) but into
"two wholes, and both the same with the divided Entire body; That the
"same Body may be now at *Athens*, and after at *Thebes*, and yet not pass
"any

“any *medium* direct or circuitous to come thither ; That a man may swallow every atom of his own body at once into his belly, limbs, back, belly, head, and mouth and all ; That one and the same individual person may be of different ages at once, above thirty years old, and yet not above three hours old at the same time ; That Religious Worship, even that which is *Latria*, may be given to Images, and yet without Idolatry ; That Christ may satisfy for the faults of men, and yet they remain obnoxious to the penalties due for those faults ; with several others of that kind :

I say, whosoever, upon pretence of being *Prophet-general* to the world, should lift up his head on high and utter such Infallible Contradictions as these in the name of the Lord of Hosts, or such oracular Definitions as must be false unless these be true, we need not spend time in asking him, *Art thou he, or do we look for another ?* but may assuredly conclude that he is that expected eminent *False-prophet* who does Antichristianly oppose himself against the Spirit of Truth which Christ has imparted to the world, partly by writing those immutable and infallible Rules of common Reason in the Souls of men ; and partly by those Holy Writings which he has left to his Church, recorded by inspired men and Prophets ; and lastly, by a special converse with more holy and sanctified Souls, to whom he does in a more certain and assured way than ordinary impart his Spirit of Illumination, as appears out of what we have cited out of the *Book of Wisdom*, and might be proved out of sundry other places of the Canonical Scripture.

6. And now whereas such a *False-prophet* as this has nothing to defend himself from the suspicion of being an Impostor, but the peremptory and impudent bearing men down that he is *Infallible* ; it is but seasonable to appeal here to the world, Whether it be not infinitely more likely that this one man, or company of men, or succession of either, doing no real Miracles to extort belief, nor living better nor so well as other men, should be *fallible* and *subject to error*, or *given to deceit*, then that the above-cited absurd Conclusions should be true. For neither he nor they can be *Infallible*, if these be real Falsities, as undoubtedly they are.

7. Adde unto all this, That if this *Pseudo-prophetick Power* should serve the true Prophets of Christ and faithful Witnesses as the false Prophet did *Micaiah*, strike them on the cheeks, nay cruelly persecute them and kill them, (dealing so with them as the *Jews* did of old with our dear Lord and Master, who complained, *But now you seek to kill me, a man that has told you the Truth which I have heard of God*) would they not prove themselves to be that *Jerusalem* that has become an Harlot, and of whom our Saviour has predicted, *That it cannot be that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem ?* she must be the Executioner. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, art not thou that mystical City of Hypocrites, the false House of God, Sodom and Egypt*, where our Lord also was crucified as well as the Prophets before him, and his holy Witnesses after him ? For the false *Jerusalem*, the adulterate Church, is ambitious to monopolize to her self the trade of blood and of slaying of the Prophets and Witnesses of God. But this may seem too vehement an Excursion,

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8. The thing that I contend for is this ; That that Polity that usurps this Authority to themselves , and does all these indignities , injuries and cruelties, and uses all these unlawful means which I have noted , for the stifling of the Spirit of Truth , inasmuch that Christ neither in his own person, nor in those Holy Records he has recommended to the world , nor in his living Instruments which he extraordinarily directs and assists , is permitted to admonish and inform men what is the right way , and what those indispensable duties to be done ; that that Polity , I say , that behaves it self thus , does therein notoriously *Antichristianize*, that is, oppose Christ in his *Prophetick Office* as much as any Antichrist can doe ; and that the being thus minded and acting after this manner is an undoubted and conspicuous piece of the crassest *Antichristianism*.

CHAP. V.

1. *That the pretence of repeating the Oblation of the real Body of Christ is a derogation to the Excellency of Christ's Priesthood.*
2. *Fuller Aggravations of this wicked affront.*
3. *A prevention of a subterfuge.*
4. *Another more dangerous assault against the Priesthood of Christ, and the main end of his Suffering.*
- 5, 6. *The making the Bloud of Christ available to take away the Guilt of sin onely , and not the Punishment, how salvagely Antichristian.*
7. *Further Aggravations of this despicable piece of Antichristianism.*
8. *That there can be nothing more fundamentally Antichristian then it.*
9. *That the crime, considering the circumstances, seems worse then that of Judas ; with the Fraud of this wickedness.*
10. *As also the great Mischief thereof.*
11. *Injuries against the Mediatourship of Christ.*
12. *An Answer to some slight pretences.*
13. *A further confutation of such Antichristian errors and mispractices.*
14. *The Fraud and Mischief of multiplying Mediators.*
15. *A special Mischief done thereby to our growth in grace and holiness.*

1. **L**et us now decypher what Antichristian opposition may be made against the *Sacerdotal Office* of Christ. There is one main and signal Privilege of the *Priesthood* of Christ , which is apparently and expressly set down by the Author to the *Hebrews*, and look'd upon as a special Dignity and Perfection thereof, *Hebr. 9.* Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the High-priest entred into the holy place every year with the bloud of others : For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world ; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed for men once to die, but after this the judgment : So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, &c. And again, chap. 10. And every Priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices , which can never take away sins : But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever , (which a little before he calls the offering of his Body once for

for all) *sat down at the right hand of God*, &c. Which words do plainly declare, That the Excellency of that true Offering of that Eternal High-priest, when he offered up his Body to his Father to reconcile the World unto God, is such, as that it needs no repetition; Salvation being perfected in that one act of Christ as to the matter of Propitiation for sins.

Whence it would follow, That the pretending that Christ is *really and actually offered up* as a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the quick and the dead by the hands of the Priest in the celebration of the Eucharist, were a foul derogation to the *Perfection* of that one Oblation of our Transcendent High-priest Christ *Jesus*, when he offered himself up to his Father for an Atonement for the sins of the whole World. I say, this presumptuous conceit of *offering him up really and bodily* in every celebration of the Lord's Supper, were an hainous Antichristian affront against the *Sacerdotal* Excellency of Christ.

2. Which Figment is still the more vile, if we consider with what course abuses of the Person of Christ, and with what villainous and barbarous injuries it must necessarily be conceived to be accompanied: How often by the mere power of that *Quinque-verbal* charm we above mentioned, he must be forced to fall into the hands of sinners, though uttered with no devotion toward him at all; for else the whole company might be constrained to commit the grossest Idolatry imaginable, even as gross as the most barbarous Nations ever did commit. But if he come into the Priest's hands, he is betrayed into worse usages than *Jeremie* that was let down into the miry Dungeon.

A mans fancy would abhor to follow whither they send that which they say is the King of Glory; the living and real Body or Person of Christ. Which horrid and nasty servitude he is put to, not once or twice, nor in one of these stinking miry prisons at once, but in many thousands at the same time, and weekly, nay, it may be, daily, for many hundreds of years together.

What despight and mockery therefore would it be for to keep their Churches clean and adorned, to burn Incense and sweet Odours, to have all things lightsome and splendid, against the Lord whom they seek come into his Holy Temple; and yet as soon as he is come, not to permit him to have the common enjoyment of these sumptuous preparations, but, as it were in mockery and despight, (as I said) to clap him up into a dungeon more foul and miry then that of the afflicted Prophet: and when he is more gently entreated, yet to enclose him in a *Pix* like a reprieved prisoner, that they may afterwards let him out occasionally into the tainted mouths and bodies of expiring men: As if Christ prophesied false upon the Cross when he said, *It is finished*; when there was such an inexhausted Residue of loathsome drudgery behind for him to undergo.

3. These things are very ugly and unworthy, which though they be not in the power of any man to doe against Christ, yet in that they profess to doe them, they acknowledge they would doe them if they could; and therefore do really vilifie him and reproach him, as they that hang up or otherwise execute an escaped Criminal *in effigie*, declare their mind as much as if they had really executed it upon his person.

But this horrid reproach against the Person of Christ is still the more aggravable, if they be so barbarously serious in imprinting it on the minds and beliefs of men, that they will lay violent hands on them that deny it, and slay them. Can a man excogitate a more industriously-managed Blasphemy against that *Holy Tabernacle* of the Godhead, the *Body* of the Lord *Jesus*, then this? or desire a firmer proof of their readiness to use the *Body* of Christ so courselly and cruelly if they could, when they do not stick to murder those that deny it to be in their power so to doe, though they had never so great a mind to doe it?

4. But though they fall short of their malice or presumption here, yet they may assault the sacred Office of Christ's *Priesthood* with a more dangerous and mischievous Attempt, exceeding ungrateful and reproachful, a poison that would eat out the very marrow and sweetness of the Christian Religion, and damp and obscure the grace and glory of the *Sacerdotal* Function of the Lord *Jesus*, and frustrate and evacuate the main end of his Sufferings, which was to satisfy the wrath of God for the sins of the world, by making himself a Propitiatory Sacrifice for them; that so many as believed in Christ *Jesus*, according to the gentle tenour of that New Covenant which he made in his Blood for remission of sins, endeavouring to follow his Precepts according to that light and strength which should be orderly or gradually imparted to them, might be sure of the favour of God, being justified by Faith in the Passion and Merits of Christ, and not by any works or merits of their own.

Rom. 5. 1.

For that this is the tenour of the New Covenant, and the true summe of that most acceptable and joyful news of the Gospel, is abundantly evident through all the Writings of the Apostles: namely, That *being justified by Faith*, in a *Forensal* sense, that is, acquitted and absolved from the guilt of all our sins, as well as in several measures, according to our several ages and growths in Christianity; sanctified and purified from them, (which absolution from guilt does necessarily imply security from punishment) *we might*, as the Apostle speaks, *have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*. This assuredly is the very Nature and Genius of the Evangelical Dispensation, and the sweetest and the most refreshing Flower to decayed Mortals in all this Garden of God, and the peculiar endearment of sincere Souls to be loyal and obedient Children and unfeigned lovers of his Son *Jesus*.

5. Whence it will follow, That there can be nothing more salvagely and barbarously Antichristian then to root out this comfortable Plant, this Tree of Life, out of God's Paradise, the Church. For such is the Cross of Christ, on which that holy Propitiatory Sacrifice did hang; the influence of whose Death is a cooling balsam that heals the wounds and stings of a troubled Conscience, which the more sincere, many times, the more distressed. And therefore the Atonement of our dying Saviour considered in his Soul-melting Passion is exhibited to her as her only and proper Cure.

Nothing therefore more despihtfully can be invented against the value and use of that inestimable Blood which our ever-to-be-adored High-priest shed upon the Cross for the securing our peace, then to misinterpret the efficacy

efficacy thereof, as if it had the virtue of onely taking away the *Guilt* of our sins, but that if we will be free from the *Punishment*, we must labour out that by our own Merits and satisfactory Penances. This is to turn the intended sweetness of the Christian Dispensation into a Strygian sourness, the joyfull and glorious Day of the Gospel into a cloudy *Egyptian* Night, (wherein dwells nothing but honour and servitude) peace of mind into perturbation, and to make the Bloud of the Son of God more vile then that of Bulls and Goats.

6. Wherefore it is manifest, That to teach that we are not justified by *Faith*, but by *Works* and *Penances*, which we must suffer as such, that is to say, as *Satisfactory penances*, and not by way of correction and emendation of life, such hardships as may be medicinal and curative of what-ever depravations of nature we labour under, but merely (as I said) for satisfaction of sin committed, as if so be the Sacrifice and Satisfaction of Christ upon the Cross were not sufficient to atone the wrath of God, without every man suffer for himself also the punishments from which Christ came to free us, that with a more ingenuous love and comfortable liberty of spirit from all such bondages of the Law and slavish anxieties we might serve him in a true and living way, in real holiness and righteousness, I say, to teach such doctrine as this, would be plainly to supplant and oppose the *Sacerdotal Office* of Christ in that eminent act and genuine issue thereof (the Oblation of himself for the sins of the world, and the making our pacification with God) then which nothing can be excogitated more Antichristian.

7. Which still will appear more hideous if we consider the extent that the necessity of these *Penances* may be conceived to have, not disturbing the peace onely of this life, but pursuing us also, like the Poetical Furies, with whips and torches, to plague us and torment us in the other state, as we have * already described: As if what-ever blemish or miscarriage of this frail life has happened could not be expiated, no not by the Bloud of the Eternal Son of God, but every man must pay his own debt in the other world to the utmost farthing. Which assuredly makes the Sufferings of Christ of none effect, and is quite against the sense of a *Propitiatory* Sacrifice.

* Book I.
Ch. 22.

Is this he of whom the Prophet *Esay* in that melodiously-mournfull burthen so sweetly and comfortably complains, *He was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities; the Chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed?* No, says this ungratefull and perfidious Antichristian power, every man shall be healed with his own stripes, and bear the burthen of his own iniquity; he shall be whipt, and stript, and wear hair-cloath next his skin, take long and tedious pilgrimages, creep upon his bare knees on flinty causeys, fast and watch, not for correction and emendation of life, but for satisfaction for his sins already committed, as if the Son of God had never satisfied for them.

Ch. 53.

And this he shall suffer not onely in this life, but the *Fire of Purgatory*, which is a temporary Hell, (and must torment men as long as they please to define) shall be kindled about him in the other world; which nothing

shall extinguish but the full payment for the whole score, (for if not for all, why for any?) a plenary satisfaction made, not by Christ, but his own self, or any friend else that will doe him the favour. For he is taught to decline the Merit and Satisfaction of Christ, who was onely able to satisfie for us, and who did it unhired and unrewarded by us; and to flie to any one, may it but bring a piece of Mony in to the Church, rather then to him.

8. Can there be then any thing more fundamentally and essentially Antichristian then thus to slight and cast away, or fraudulently for filthy lucre to suppress and conceal, the precious fruit of the Passion and Merits of so sufficient and loving a Saviour, and make men believe that they are to be saved by their own Merits, and to satisfie both here and hereafter for their own sins; whenas it is a thing both impossible and needless, and diametrically opposite to the meaning and design of the Death and Passion and complete Satisfaction made by our Blessed Saviour himself?

9. This doctrine seems abominable enough of it self; but if we consider upon what grounds and with what circumstances it may be foisted into the Church by that Antichristian power we are a-describing, it will be yet infinitely more hatefull and execrable. *Judas* betrayed Christ for a piece of mony into the hands of them that crucified him, for which his memory is accursed to all posterity: And yet Christ was betrayed but to that which he was willing to undergoe, namely, He willingly underwent the wrath of God, that he might shelter us from it, which was the very end of his Agonie and Passion.

Now suppose this false Church we are depainting should for a piece of mony betray the very End and Design of Christ's Passion, and quite frustrate and evacuate it; were not Christ worse betrayed here then by *Judas* himself? For *Judas* betrayed him but to what he had a mind to, that he might be an Oblation to God for the remission of sins to all Believers: But this Antichristian Church, frustrating him of the End of his Suffering, more barbarous then *Judas*, betray the Saviour of the World to an unwilling death, and disappoint him of that prize for which alone he parted with his dearest blood; and are more truly the Murtherers of this Just one then the very Jews that Crucified him, robbing him of that which was the life in his death, and prized by him above his own life, that is to say, His being a sufficient Sacrifice and Atonement for the sins of the whole World.

Which holy and weighty Article of the Christian Faith that Church which barter away for gain, to scare the people into the belief of a necessity of buying Pardons and Indulgences, of hiring Priests to sing their Souls out of Purgatory, of redeeming themselves by summes of mony from cruel imposed Penances; must needs in this point Antichristianize in the highest and most hainous manner against the Sacerdotal Office of Christ that can be imagined.

10. This is the wicked *Fraud* they commit, and the *Mischief* is not unproportionable. For by the perswading of men that they are justified by their own Merits, and must satisfie for themselves for all their sins and offences, either in this life or that which is to come; or both, nay indeed

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in both, unless they die so perfect as no modest man will ever imagine himself, they put the minds of the serious upon an intolerable rack of solicitude about the torments of *Purgatory*, which they affrightfully set out to be of the same nature, though not of the same continuance, with those of Hell; or swell the minds of the vain-spirited with unwholesome tumours of Pride, upon conceit of such merit as never was nor ever can be in any man living that is a mere man; and, lastly, deface the peculiar glory of Christ and his Religion, in which there does really breath nothing but sweetness and pity and tender compassion; our Head and Sovereign, the Lord *Jesus*, sustaining those great torments both of minde and body on the Cross, to set his People free, that they might serve him in a way of Love and Ingenuity, contrary to that bloody and cruel vassalage in which Satan aforesometimes had enslaved the world.

Wherefore this false Church by the Fiction of *Purgatory* and the bloody and cruel *Penances* imposed on the flock of Christ, by merciless Flagellations and excoriations of the flesh, more like the Priests of the Devil, that old Tyrant, then like the Ministers of the Gospel of the Son of God, would make Christendom of one hue again with ancient Paganism, and sell the children of *Israel* into a second *Egyptian* bondage to be afflicted and oppressed under those hard Task-masters: which state of things how grossely Antichristian it is, I have already abundantly noted.

II. But yet there is a further opposing of Christ's *Sacerdotal Office*; and that very considerable, as he *intercedes and meditates for us with God*. Concerning which the Scripture is very expresse, as in the former case, *That Christ was offered but once*, so in this, *That our Mediatour is but one*. For there is one God, and one Mediatour between God and men, the Man *Christ Jesus*, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Where not onely the doctrine is asserted, *That there is but one Mediatour*, but the reason subjoyned, *Who gave himself a ransom for all*. Which being peculiar to him alone, there can be no Mediatour betwixt God and Man but he: And the merits of his Passion and all the perfections of his life are of so infinite virtue, as being the declared Son of God, that to joyn the Merits of any Saints or Angels with his in this behalf, would be a reproachfull and blasphemous derogation to the Supereminency of his condition.

Wherefore the Right of Mediatourship upon point of Merit being Christ's alone, it must of necessity be an act of Antichristianism, and an injury against Christ's person, to joyn any other with him in that Office; as if he himself were not sufficient, but were so weak and unable for that Function, that he wanted coadjutors.

12. As for those Allegations, *That God will spare a City for fifty righteous in it*; and that he would protect *Jerusalem* for his servant *David's* sake, because he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord; and that he will be mercifull to thousands of them that love him and keep his Commandments; No reasonings from these Scriptures will reach the matter in hand. For these are all about *Temporal* concernments; and the Fate of the righteous would be involved in that of the wicked in the first instance. As for that of *David*, he is acknowledged a Type of Christ;

but the Sun being up, the Night is fled away. Nor do I see that any thing can be inferred out of that of *Exodus*, but that the posterity of the just, if they continue so, shall be continued. These therefore are but pretences, and can never reach the case that I would decypher, which is this; That we should *put up our Prayers* to this or that Saint, intreating them that they would intercede for us, as if they had the same privilege that Christ has, who is God as well as Man, and therefore is every where ready to hear us.

13. Wherefore this is to rob Christ of his honour and privilege, to presume that the Saints have a kind of *Omnipresence* or *Omniscience*, which is onely proper to him: As also in a solemn Religious way at the Altar and in the Temple of such or such a Saint to pray to God in the Merits of these Saints to grant this or that petition, were it not to proclaim openly that there is a deficiency in the Merits of Christ our great Mediatour, when we thus seek refuge in the names and merits of others?

How Antichristian then would it be if they should prefer some Saint, suppose the Virgin *Mary*, before *Christ* himself, in their addresses to her, beseeching her that she would command her Son in the virtue of that duty he owes to his Mother; if they should give unto her the Title of *the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of Mercies, their Life, their Hope, the Light of the Church, their Advocate and Mediatress*; nay should turn all the Psalms of *David* into Petitions or Praises to her, onely putting *Domina* instead of *Dominus*, *Lady* instead of *Lord*? I say, what an Antichristian Figment would this be, to make the humble Virgin to justle thus with the Son of God for the Sovereignty of Heaven and the Mediatourship general of the whole World? Not to mention the making of whole swarms of other Mediatours upon the account also of their own Merit. For if it be not upon account of their own *Merits* and sufferings, (though they could not merit nor suffer any more then would serve for themselves) why should they make them *Mediatours*? But if their *Merits* adde any thing to the *Merits* and *Sufferings* of Christ, how was he a perfect High-Priest, or his *Merits* perfect?

Wherefore it is manifest that to make other *Meritorious* Mediatours besides Christ, is an Antichristian reproach and calumnie against the Perfection and Excellency of Christ's *Mediatourship*.

14. But the *wicked Fraud* of this Invention may be the multiplying of Offerings to those new and appropriate Intercessours, who, being well bribed, will plead the cause of their Clients very zealously in the Court of Heaven; or at least this Antichristian Priesthood may make them believe so, who has sold away the *onely Mediatourship* of Christ as well as the virtue of his precious Death and Passion, for a piece of mony; not considering the grievous Mischiefs that may come upon the Church by multiplying of Patrons and Mediatours.

For how easily are the heedless people lulled asleep in security by thinking they have such a sure friend of this or that Saint, which they have peculiarly chosen to themselves for their Patron, whom they honour with certain superstitious Ceremonies, and think they so oblige him thereby, that live they as they list, they will notwithstanding get safely to heaven,

heaven, though let in at some back-door by such a special friend there, who will be ready to receive them? Whenas our Saviour Christ has told them afore-hand, that *unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*; and that those whose lives are unreclaimed, he will not own, but command them to depart as workers of Iniquity.

How easily are they hereby drawn off from that faith and reliance they ought to have on God and Christ, expecting even Sanctification and Redemption from that which cannot save? How basely is their mind depressed to low thoughts, which ought to be lifted up to God alone? How subject to be immersed into the courtest and grossest degrees of *Idolatry*, whilst they without any stop conceit That the Temple, the Altar, the Priest with all his holy Vestments, the Festival and all the holy Offerings are dedicated and designed to the honour of that Saint whom they make their Patron and Advocate?

15. And lastly, How will that excellent and most powerfull instrument of our Sanctification and Renovation of our Minds into the lovely Image of the Lord Christ, I mean the *Cross and Passion of our onely Mediatour*, and the Meditation thereon, whereby our Souls might effectually be engaged to follow his steps in all things, and serve him out of an unfeigned love, how will this excellent Instrument, I say, be made useles and ineffectual, by this diverting the minds of men to some other self-chosen Patron, or by distracting them amidst the variety of so many Mediatours, (which are wholly insignificant as to any service or furtherance of real Sanctity) that that due love and loyalty which is owing onely to Christ, and which were the very saving life of our Souls, and the purification of our hearts, and requisite preparation for an eternal commerce with him in his Heavenly Kingdom, would be hugely diminished and made languid, or else quite lost? which is a dammage and *Mischief* plainly incomputable and irreparable. I say, The derivation of our devotion and affection from Christ into so many by-streams, and upon such Objects from which there is infinitely less obligation and urgency upon us to become good and holy, is no less then the hazzard or forfeiture of our eternal Salvation.

It is plain therefore that the opposing and supplanting the Ends and Usefulness of the *Sacerdotal Office* of Christ in such sort as I have declared, would be a very considerable part of that *Idea of Antichristianism* which I endeavour to describe.

CHAP. VI.

1. *The opposing of Christ in his Three noted Offices how baineously Antichristian.*
2. *An enumeration of other Titles of Christ. Opposition against him as he is the Truth;*
3. *As he is the Light;*
4. *As he is the Life.*
- 5, 6. *Opposition to his Divinity by equallizing Saints and Angels to him:*
7. *Tea by preferring what is but a Creature before him.*
- 8, 9, 10. *Opposition against his Paternal Title by injuries and*

and cruelties to his children. 11. Opposition to him as he is Prince of Peace, 12. By needless Definitions in points of Opinion; 13. By taking away the obligation of Oaths; 14. By making war with the Saints.

1. **T**HUS have we delineated unto you the nature of this Antichristian Opposition in these *Three* generally-noted *Offices of Christ*, which even alone considered, one would think enough to make up a complete *Antichrist*, that is to say, so to corrupt any Ecclesiastick power, as truly and fully to denominate it *Antichristian*. But yet this *Antichristianism* may be further displayed by more particular Oppositions to *other Titles of Christ*. We will not be curious to name all, nor so tedious as to insist long upon any which we shall further name, they being reducible some way or other most of them to some one of those *Three Offices* we have already insisted on.

2. The most notable of these *Titles* are these; *The Truth, The Light,* and *The Life*, in the New Testament; and in *Esay, The mighty God, The everlasting Father,* and *The Prince of Peace*. This is the style, these are the Sacred *Titles* of Christ: And therefore any Power pretending to succeed him, and to have right and authority to rule for him here on Earth, so far forth as they contradict and oppose these *Titles* of Christ in their management of things, so far forth they do discover themselves *Antichristian*.

As now if this pretended Power should traffick much in *lying Legends* and *Figments*, in *false Miracles* and *cunningly-devised Fables*, which the Apostle protests against, to lead about the people with fraud and guilefulness, to engraft such opinions in their Minds as would most of all widen their purses, in such manner as I have had already occasion more particularly to describe; and also to darken all with a multitude of Ceremonies, which are but shadows of the Truth, if they be that: Such a constitution of things as this does plainly discover it self to be *Antichristian*, and to oppose that *Title* of Christ which styles him *The Truth*. Without are *Murderers and Sorcerers, and every one that loveth and maketh a Lie*: That is not so remarkably spoken in the *Apocalyps* for nothing. And it is worth the noting also in * *Daniel*, that *Antiochus*, who is generally look'd upon as a *Type of Antichrist*, is said to cast down the Truth to the ground.

3. The next Title is, *The Light*, which is a figurative Title, and signifies *Wisdom* and *Knowledge*; and indeed upon the matter is but a symbolical expression of the former. For *Truth* and *true Wisdom* are one and the same thing; but in that it irradiates and informs the minds of others, it is more especially called *Light*. And Christ is so called both in that he enlightens every man that comes into the world according to his Divine nature, and in that he was *the Light of the Gentiles and the Glory of his people Israel* in his exterior Personal manifestation to the world.

Wherefore to endeavour to keep the people in a worse than *Egyptian* darkness under pretence of raising their devotion to God, when the plot is

is to have them wholly at their own devotion, and to abuse them and mislead them as they please, it were plainly to Antichristianize against this Second Title of Christ, *The Light*, and to defeat the End of his coming into the World, which was to be a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*, and to bring them that sit in darkness out of the Prison-house. And Christ has entailed this Title also upon his true followers and Successors; *Ye are the Light of the World*. What then are they that are not onely not shining Lights themselves, but industrious abettors and promoters of darkness and ignorance, and diligent hinderers of any true light that may be let into the Church from others?

4. The Third Title of Christ is, *The Life*, as it is written in S. John's Gospel, *In him was the life, and the life was the light of men*. Which life I conceive S. Paul describes very favourably, when he saith, *That the Kingdom of Heaven is not meat, nor drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. Christianity therefore is a dispensation of inward life flowing out into all laudable and usefull actions; not a Babel of confused and intangling Opinions and unprofitable Observances, a heap of Ceremonies and Conceits, but a steady abode in God, who is *Love*, and will teach us and inable us from an inward sense of Life to love him with all our hearts and all our souls, and our Neighbour as our selves, which is the most eminent fulfilling of the whole Law.

Wherefore instead of this holy dispensation of the Spirit and Life, if there were introduced a rigid adherence to empty Opinions and unedifying Observations of multifarious Ceremonies, this would be an Antichristian Trespass against this Third Title of Christ, while we thus substitute insipid Theories and dead Formalities in the place of the Power and Life of Godliness.

5. The Fourth Title is, *The mighty God*; and the *Divinity of Christ* is an acknowledged Article of our Faith, and so choice a Prerogative of his Person, that whatsoever does derogate from this, infringe or weaken it, cannot but be deemed considerably *Antichristian*. Such therefore must be the building of Temples and Altars, the burning of Incense, and religious Invocations and Prayers to Saints or Angels.

Nay, though there were no Prayers put up to them, the solemnly reposing the *Reliques of Saints* in any Church or Chappel, and making them therewith the Patrons or Tutelar *Genii* as it were of such a City or Province, were no less then *Idolatry*, and a Superstition much like that of the ancient Pagans in their *Telestms* and *Palladiums*, and their *Dii Tutelares*, whose presence they conceited to be detained by these superstitious Ceremonies, and so made them Patrons and Protectours of their Cities and Countries. Wherefore if the Christians by religiously reposing the *Reliques* of this or that Saint in this or that City should be so superstitiously conceited as to repose a *Trust* in the Aide of these Saints from Pestilence, from War, from Thunder, from Earthquakes or the like, believing them powerfull and benigne Protectours of the Place; this undoubtedly were a kind of Religious worship done to them, and could not be less then the sin of *Idolatry*.

For all such *Faith* and *Repose upon any particular invisible Power* is Idolatrous,

Idolatrous, as well as *Invocation*, because it as well supposes in that particular invisible Power what is onely proper to God. For there is no certainty of the Presence, and consequently of the Assistance, of an invisible Power in any one place, unless the nature of that Power be to be in all places at once. And therefore he that puts his *Trust* for Aid and Assistance, in such a sort as I have described, in a particular invisible Power, makes that invisible Power *Omnipresent* or *Omniscient*, which are the incommunicable Attributes of God, and thereby commits *Idolatry*, as I have above more fully argued in the like case.

6. The mere trusting therefore in Saints as Patrons and Protectours of such and such Places, as well as the building of Altars, burning of Incense to them, or invoking them, derogates from the onely-assured Patronage and powerfull Divinity of our Blessed Saviour. For by these Divine honours we equallizing such Patrons or Mediatours as these to the onely-begotten Son of God, make him less then he is, and but like them; that is to say, make him unlike himself, obscure the peculiarity of his Divinity, and disclaim his Godhead; *μη κελεύμενοι τὴν κεφαλὴν*, as the * Apostle speaks, letting go our true Head, and putting our selves under another Chieftain. For there is onely one that is capable of this Divine honour, which therefore if we give to any other, we act the part of that *Antichrist* who is defined by *the denying the Father and the Son*. For the *Father* and the *Son* are one.

Such an arguing as this God seems to imple in his expostulation with the *Israelites* in the wilderness, *O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me Victims and Sacrifices by the space of forty years in the Wilderness? Yea ye took up the Tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your God Remphan, &c.* The sense of which assuredly is this; That though the *Israelites* did sacrifice, as they thought, or did pretend, their usual sacrifices to God, according to the Law of *Moses*, during their abode in the wilderness, yet because they served and acknowledged other Gods besides him, he infers (and that truly and justly, even according to the humane Faculties) that they really did not serve him at all, that is, did not acknowledge him to be what he was, the onely true God. And therefore they erring in the apprehension of the Excellency of that Object to which Divine worship is due, as if it were so mean that there could be many such, did not direct their worship to him, but to a phancy or Idol of their own making, to which they profanely attributed the name of *Jehovah*. For the true *Jehovah* was not so vile a Being as there could be any partakers of Divine honour with himself.

And so it is with Christ, who is the same true God blessed for ever. He that gives *Divine honour*, which is due to him alone, unto Saints or Angels, disclaims his *Divinity*, and makes him but as one of them. This would be one Antichristian way of undermining his Godhead, by equallizing mere Creatures unto him.

7. But there is another way, or rather the same way but in an higher degree, and consequently more Antichristian; and that is, the preferring that which is but a mere Creature, though a blessed and glorious one, before him or above him. As for example, if either Fraud or blind Devotion should exalt the ever-blessed Virgin, not onely to that Divine honour of

of having Temples and Altars erected to her with Prayers and Invocations of her, as in the worship of the rest of the Saints and Angels, but that these Honours should be done much more frequently and more magnificently to the Virgin Mary then to Christ himself; that is to say, that there should be more Temples and Altars, and more sumptuous, erected to her then to Christ Jesus, more Devotions, Prayers and Offerings made to her then to him, a greater acknowledgement of mercy and goodness from her, then from him who poured out his Life in the bitter Agonies of his bloody Passion for the Salvation of the World; and, lastly, be ascribed unto her a Superiority and Authority over Christ, to command him to doe this or that by virtue of that duty he owes unto her.

Certainly if this be not against the Divinity of Christ, nothing can be, thus to make him inferiour to a deceased woman, even him that is perfect God as well as perfect Man. For it is plainly to *un-deify* him, if I may so speak, and to declare him to be no God at all. Which is as *Antichristian* an outrage against the Divinity of Christ as can be imagined.

For who is *Antichrist* if he be not that denies the Father, and the Son ^{1 John 2. 22.} who is one and equal with the Father? And who denies the Godhead of both Father and Son, but he that pronounces the Mother of Christ according to the flesh to be greater then them both, as certainly she is if she be greater then either?

8. The Fifth Title is, *The Everlasting Father*. The Seventy translate it Πατήρ τῷ μέλλοντι αἰῶνι, meaning, I suppose, *the world under the Messiah*. The efficacy of which Title I conceive the Mystery of *Regeneration* to reflect upon; Christ regenerating us into his own Image by the inward working of his Eternal Spirit. *All things that the Father hath are mine*: (and it is no wonder, he being one with the Father) *therefore said I, that he (the Spirit) shall take of mine, and shew it unto you*. Wherefore Christ regenerating the World which was to come by the operation of his Eternal Spirit, he was rightly and fitly styled Πατήρ τῷ μέλλοντι αἰῶνι, *The Father of the World to come*, or, if you will, *The everlasting Father*, as being so in his own Essence, and begetting Children to endless Eternities. ^{John 18. 15.}

Of this Mysterie he treated in his converse upon Earth with his secret disciple Nicodemus: *Unless a man be born from above, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Marvel not that I said unto thee, that we must be born from above. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but thou knowest not from whence it comes, nor whether it goes: so is every one that is born of the Spirit*. No unregenerate man is acquainted with the sense of the first rise and motion of the Spirit, nor understands whither those actions and speeches tend that proceed therefrom. But it is so with these as is said in the *Apocalyp*s of the hundred forty four thousands, who by virtue of their new birth *sung a new Song which none could learn but the hundred forty four thousands which were redeemed from the Earth*, by being born from above, as our Saviour spake to Nicodemus. These are the true *Israelites*, in whose mouth is found no guile, and who by the guidance of that Spirit by which they are regenerate follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes. ^{John 3. 3, 7.} ^{Chap. 14.}

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9. Wherefore Christ being to his true Church so real a *Father*, by a true and living Regeneration and Renovation of their Minds by his Spirit into such holy sentiments as appertain to all those that are indeed the Sons of God; to treat them so as if they were mere Images made of wood or stone, or rather dead matter to be carved upon, and have the inscription of any thing that a pretended Infallible Power shall be pleased to engrave upon them; this is an high Antichristian affront against the *Paternity* of Christ: as if he did not beget living Children, who have as certainly the sense of discernment in Spiritual things as any Animal birth has Natural; but that the number of his Elect were but a certain Tale of billets, brick or stone, to be hewen or carved, or any way ordered, according to the petulancy and imperiousness of a self-willed Power, who, under a pretence of an infallible and unfailing succession that must be in the Church, has stepped into the place of Christ.

Maxima debetur puero reverentia———

is most true concerning every child of God. For there is that Divine sense in them, against which whatsoever is unholy and unfavoury will grate very hard and unpleasantly, and what is false will be found by them very disharmonious both to those immutable Principles of Truth in their unprejudiced minds, and also to the written Oracles of God, which were penned down by the same Spirit by which this genuine off-spring of Christians are regenerated.

Wherefore, as I said, to use these as if there were no life, no spirit, no sense or discernment in them, but that they must as passively, without any Conviction or Appeal to any thing in themselves, bear the Dictates of this usurping Power we describe, as a Table-book or Paper-book which is irresistibly writ upon by that hand that pleases, is an enormous Injury against Christ, as he is *the Everlasting Father* and holy Regeneratour of his true Church into his own life and likeness. But to murder and massacre these Children of his because they do so stoutly and exactly *Patrescere*, so conscientiously and carefully tread in their Father's steps, and witness his Truth to the world; I leave to any man to judge if there can be imagined any thing more hellishly Antichristian against the *Paternity* of Christ then that. For what can be more hostile and contrary to a *Father* then to murder his genuine children, and for that very reason, because they so lively resemble him, and so faithfully adhere to their Father's virtuous practices and principles?

10. I might adde also that the over-exercising of the Minds and Bodies of men in the multifarious observances of external Ceremonies, and making them dance or trot from one Superstitious performance to another, might be a disappointment of the Divine Birth, as the over-much exercising of Women in dancing or what other feats of Activity or fore labour makes them often miscarry in that Child-bearing that is natural. But I will not insist upon these things.

11. The Sixth and last Title is, *The Prince of Peace*. In which Principality or Authority if any should claim succession, and yet administer the Affairs of Christ's Church such a way as will naturally, if not necessarily, fill it full of broils and contentions; this power would certainly be

be a supplanter of the *Peaceable* government of Christ, and be the Author of an Antichristian Tyrannie and Confusion. As for example, If this usurping Power should coin new Articles of belief for their own benefit, contrary to the known Principles of Scripture and Reason, and require the profession of these from the Church of Christ, as also appoint suspected Observances, smelling rank of Idolatry and Superstition; it were in a manner impossible but that it should cause vast rendings and tearings in the Church, and fill the world full of strife and opposition.

Also if they should make it their business to define the sense of Scripture by a more determinate meaning than there were use of in the Church, and put their Determinations and Expositions upon men as necessary points of belief; This would also make much against the *Peaceableness* of the Church, men being in a manner fatally propending to think this or that way in things that are not necessary to Salvation, to be determined either. There would needless violence therefore be done to the Consciences of men, thereby to set the world on fire. Whenas what is general, is large and unitive and takes all in, and gives them leave to live peaceably one by another without justling or crowding.

12. But the *Folly* and *Fraud* of this curiosity would be the Endeavour of gaining or rather extorting respect from the people, and of making their Function seem considerable, and their Learning great, and their Judgements unerrable, and that they may feel their Authority, and make others to feel it, though to the discontent and dissettling of the Church of Christ. As if their living exemplarily, and urging the performance of what is plain in Scripture, and keeping an orderly Discipline in those things, would not gain them more respect, and make them more honourable both in the eyes of God and man: or as if they would not appear more *infallible* by insisting in his steps who is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, then by grossly crossing this way, or going out of it for some by-advantages of the World: The discovery of which *Frauds* must needs make them odious to all men. And lastly, as for their having their Authority felt, Christ has shewed them the way, if they would follow it, *He taught as having authority, and not as the Scribes; for they say, and doe not.*

Mat. 7. 8.
Chap. 23.

13. This is one way of *Antichristianizing* against that sacred Title of Christ, *The Prince of Peace*. There is another more vile and execrable than that heart could imagine that is not acquainted with the depths of Satan; and that is, If this Antichristian power we describe should take upon them to absolve the Princes of Christendom from their *Oaths* and *Covenants* they make one to another upon their terms of Peace, as also to absolve Subjects from their *Oaths of Allegiance* to their Sovereigns; were not this to break a-pieces all the bonds of Unity that not onely Religion but the Laws of Nature do afford, thus to destroy the Sacredness of an *Oath, which is the end of all strife*? How then can that Power challenge a right of succession to the *Prince of Peace*, which takes away the chiefest tie of Peace that humane affairs are capable of?

Heb. 6. 16.

Chap. 3.
Sect. 8.

Chap. 13. 7.

Chap. 17. 6.

14. And lastly, that bloody position of *taking away mens lives for mistakes in Opinion*, when notwithstanding they are otherwise unblamable in faith and conversation, and unfeigned professors of Christian Truths that are evidently revealed in the Word of God, nay to take away their lives for not doing and holding things quite contrary to the expresse Word of God written both in our inward Souls and in the Holy Scripture, as I have in several Instances declared in this description of *Antichristianism*; What were this but to hang out the bloody flag against the true Church of Christ, and to proclaim open war against them, to bid battel against them that are inrolled into the company of the Lamb, and are the professed Souldiers of the *Prince of Peace*? Whose opposers therefore, in such a sort as I have intimated, cannot but be that Apocalyptick Beast *that makes war with the Saints*, or that *Mother of Harlots who is drunk with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus*. So little doubt would there be of this last Opposition's proving an *Antichristian* Character of the deepest dye. But of this subject more hereafter.

CHAP. VII.

1. *That any Constitution of things that naturally opposes and suppresses the Divine Life is Antichristian in the highest measure.* 2. *Such as Idolatry, Superstition, and all the above-mentioned Oppositions to Christ's Offices and Titles.* 3. *The opinion of a virtue in the Sacraments ex opere operato, and of the needlessness of our attention to our Devotions.* 4. *Dumb shows, and the resting in the mere doing of a Religious duty, be it from what principle it will.* 5. *Easy Absolution, and slight Penances.* 6. *Plenary Indulgences purchased by money from Ecclesiastick Authority,* 7. *A general note prefixed touching the Mischiefs of the several Oppositions against the Divine Life.* 8. *The plausibility of the Supposition of an Ecclesiastick Power and Pomp more then Imperial.* 9. *The weakness of the grounds for the said Supposition.* 10. *The consequential Mischief thereof, in driving the minds of Church-men from the study of Truth and Holiness:* 11. *Yea in making them oppose every thing that is True and Holy, if it oppose their designs of Ambition and Avarice.* 12. *That such a Luciferial Power as this were the very ruine of the Kingdom of Christ upon Earth,* 13. *And the turning of his Church into a mere Mart or Fair.*

1. **T**HUS expressely and clearly have we delineated the Image of *Antichrist* in his opposing of Christ in his Offices, and in running quite counter to the most Sacred Titles that do adorn his Person. We come now to the *Divine Life* as it is propagable in the world, and for which Christ was pleased to take our nature upon him, and to lay down his life for us; *That he might purchase to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Ephes. 5. 27.

Which being the very End of Christ's coming into the world, of the suffering

suffering all those hardships during his pilgrimage here on Earth, and of submitting himself to the shamefull and unexpressibly-painfull Death of the Cross; for any to oppose, supplant, or any ways to defeat this so serious and earnest design of his by any countenanced method or constitution of things, would certainly be *Antichristian* in the highest measure.

Let us now therefore consider distinctly and articulately the most material ways of opposing or supplanting this design, laying before us in view such depraved Laws, Constitutions or Practices in a Church, as tend to the extinguishing the *Divine Life in general*, or are more particularly directed against the *Root* or *Branches* thereof, namely, either against *Faith*, that is to say, the belief of the Summe of Christianity, or else against those inestimable Graces of *Humility*, *Purity* and *Charity*.

2. For the depainting of this Opposition against *the Divine Life in general*, I need not put my pencil into any new colours. Those multifarious ways of *Idolatry* and *Superstition* which I have noted in the first and second Limb of *Antichristianism*, and which carrie mens minds out to external exercises that profit nothing, but elude the right intention of Zeal and Devotion which should better our spirits and make us more inwardly and vitally holy and righteous, these do certainly of their own accord lay asleep or suffocate the *Life of God* in the Soul, and like false food either poison or starve it.

Book I. ch. 12,
17, 18, &c.

Those Oppositions also that were against the *Offices* of Christ; the vilifying his Law, the removing it from the eyes of the people, or the reading of it and their publick Service in an unknown Tongue; the interpreting his serious *Commands* for slight *Advices* left to our pleasure to follow or forbear; false Glosses put upon the Oracles of God by pretended infallible Interpreters; the defeating that mighty Engine of Obedience to Christ, which is the affectionate Meditation upon his Death and Passion, his direfull Sufferings for us, by diverting of our Thoughts and distracting them by several insignificant Objects, pety Advocates and Patrons, that run away with our Devotions, and rob Christ of his honour, and our Souls of the chief means of their Sanctification and Salvation: These, with several other particulars I might instance in, are plain Antichristian Assaults and Oppugnations of *the Divine Life in general*, and tend to the sweeping of all away before them.

3. To which you may adde those ungodly surmises; That it is sufficient to number over our Devotions without defixing our Mind upon what we say; and that a more hovering and general attention will serve the turn, our particular Thoughts wandering to what else we please; That the Sacraments confer Grace *ex opere operato*; it being the very difference betwixt the Sacraments of the old Covenant and the new, that the former confer Grace *ratione operis operantis*, the latter *ratione operis operati*; and That any inward good Motion is not requisite in him that receives the Sacraments: What can more relaxate those earnest breathings and hearty aspirings of our Souls towards a real renovation of our natures into true holiness and righteousness, then such corrupt conceits as these?

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4. The feeding also the people with dumb shows, instead of searching their Consciences and exciting their zeal by intelligible Exhortations or Forms of Devotion that will re-mind them of their duty, and imprint upon them the sense of such holy things as they stand in want of, and inflame their desire after them; this also would be a defrauding of the *Divine Life* of that food which it should be increased and nourished by. As also would be that conceit *generally of all Acts of Religion*, that the duty of the Act is done if the Act be but *externally* done, be the Principle what it will, though it neither proceed from nor reach to that fountain of life which ought to be ebullient in every Regenerate Christian, and without which no man can reasonably esteem himself regenerate. Certainly such Opinions, Customes and Usages as these must needs wear out true and living Holiness out of the World.

5. And yet we may conceive a further *Antichristian* poison, that will wonderfully damp and benumme men in all their endeavours after true Sanctity; and that is *easy Absolution* and *slight Penance* after *formal Confession*. For Confession, which is so rigorously extorted by this Antichristian Church I am now describing, being accompanied with a conceit that upon their *Absolution* and performance of imposed *Penances* they are then right and straight, and in as secure a condition as if they had never sinned; the just chastisements of their offended Consciences being flaked by the soft and false interposal of the Priest's pretended Authority to absolve where God has bound, (as certainly every-one is bound over to that eternal doom at the last day, let the Priest pretend the power of loosing him here as much as he will; and he shall answer for what he has done in the flesh, which no Absolution nor Penance can clear him from, unless he really forsake his wicked ways, and become a sincere Convert to God;) I say, from this constitution of things touching *Absolution* and *Penance*, it must needs follow that the raines will be let loose on the necks of all men, they being given to understand what a slight thing it is to sin against God, when they can have their reconciliation upon such easy terms. Whenas it would be a greater awe upon mens spirits to let them be condemned or acquitted by their own Consciences, being so well assisted by the Word of God and the Light of Reason and Nature to lay the Law against them, and never to leave urging them till they have emerged into a competent sincerity of heart: Which when they have arrived to, Christ within them and his Word without them will absolve them and give them peace of mind; and, if need be, they may also receive *Absolution* from some sober and faithfull Priest, whose honesty and exemplarity of life has fitted him for so serious a function, as I have intimated above, where I had slipt aforehand into this Argument.

6. But the most outrageous *Antichristian* effort against the *Divine Life* would be the persuasion that upon the paying of certain tolerable summes of money, and doing some slight superstitious performances or other, they shall obtain by virtue of the supreme Ecclesiastick Authority plenary *Indulgences* and *Pardons* for vast numbers of years, and the certainty of freeing of themselves or their friends from Purgatory.

As, for example, suppose that some Churches, or, if you will, many, may

may have purchased from the Ecclesiastick Sovereignty a perpetuity of plenary *Indulgence*, so that he that prays before such an Altar in this Church should have free remission of all his sins past, and security from punishment. But this is a small matter. Suppose that such a piece of Devotion at some other Altars, and in some other Churches, would procure the pardon of sin and punishment for twenty, thirty, fifty, or an hundred thousand years; and that the saying of such and such Prayers at such an Altar would deliver a Soul out of Purgatory; that the bowing at the Name of *Jesus* may procure *toties, quoties*, twenty years pardon; that the mere stooping to kiss a Cross on the pavement of a Church, an Indulgence or Pardon for all a mans sins; that the pattering over so many Prayers, especially if there be the weight of some consecrated Medal, as an *Agnus Dei* or the like, annexed to them, will save a Soul out of Purgatory; that one Salutation of the Blessed Virgin shall gain eighty years pardon; that the saying a certain short Prayer, devoutly looking on the Picture of Christ, shall obtain ten thousand days of Pardon, and the saying of others no less then ten hundred thousand years; and for but the looking on a certain Crucifix, six thousand years of Pardon.

These intimations would be infinite. I have produced so much already as implies such a Constitution in a Church, as nothing can be more opposite to or destructive of that Life and Holiness Christ came to plant in the World, and therefore cannot but be judged very foully *Antichristian*.

7. The *Falseness* and unjustifiableness of these proceedings I need not goe about to evince, they being so damnable at first sight: nor point at the *Fraud*, it being so conspicuous; which is, as I have above intimated in like cases, the emunging of the people of their money: And the *Mischief* is here the Opposition or Extinction of the *Divine Life*, as it will be likewise in the *Root and Branches*. So that we need hereafter note no other *Mischief*: then will be comprized in the Subject we shall be upon, the *Mischief* being expressed in the very Titles of the Argument. Which I thought fit here to note once for all, and would proceed to the delineating of the next *Limb of Antichristianism*, did there not one consideration more offer it self to my mind, that would help to make the state of the Church very *Stepdame-like* to any offers toward growth and increase in life and Godliness. Which supposition is this.

8. Let us imagine that either a mighty party of the Ecclesiasticks had plotted it so, or the Ambition of one Bishop with some few adherents, being backed with opportunities and wanting no wit, policy, nor industry, had brought it about to be so, that he and his Successors should be declared, and by a very considerable part accepted for, the *Universal Bishop of the World*, should be esteemed of an Authority more sacred, high and glorious than of any Emperour or Potentate upon earth: that there should be substituted under him several Orders, some of very high degree, which should be, as it were, so many *Ecclesiastick Princes*, equal in a manner for Pomp and Splendour to the Kings of the Earth; besides Patriarchs, Metropolitans, and many other very rich and illustrious Ranks of the Priesthood, the Church in the interim abounding with sundry

forts of very creditable and profitable Preferments to bear out all.

Why, thus far, you will say, is very good news, and it were desirable it were so indeed, That Religion being the most Sacred and precious thing in the world, those that are in a more special manner the Supporters and Pillars thereof should be the most richly splendid and adorned.

9. I do confess so a man would think at first sight. For it seems but a respect to God, whose Servants they are by a more peculiar dedication. But by the same reason our Churches should be as well the most splendid as the most ample Buildings, especially there being no danger of infecting these walls of stone with either the sense of Pride or any other uncomely Passion.

But suppose that these pretended living Stones of the Temple of God were as unexcitable to Pride or Lust as the dead Stones of the walls of a Church; though this extreme glory and pomp and excessfull affluency of the World might doe them no hurt as to their Manners, yet I believe they would profess they found little good in it, unless it were in being Treasurers for the Poor, (which would be something a Secular employment) or in giving testimony to the World, that Christian Happiness consists not in these things; which yet the World would not think them serious in, unless they did actually quit them. And for the external pomp and splendidness of their own Persons, it is credible they would declare that if the Houses of God, I mean the external Churches, were at least decently, if not in some case gloriously, adorned, their eyes could better view that and with more pleasure then any Imperial Ornaments on their own head and back, which they could not well see without the help of Looking-glasses.

This would be a greater pleasure to them, as also to see no poor but such as were wholesomely and handsomely apparrell'd, not so squalidly and forlornly that they appear as ungratefull Eye-sores in Providence.

But to make rich Miters and costly Habiliments for a *S. Peter* or *S. Paul*, were not indeed to make a Coat for the Moon, but (which is as ridiculous) to make a golden Cope for the Sun, as if his native splendour did not out-shine all such artificial Ornaments. The gorgeousness of Apparel may make the person that wears it to be gazed or stared upon; but unspotted Holiness and Vertue will make the possessor thereof truly revered and adored.

10. This excessive Grandeur therefore in the Governours of the Church, though they were as holy as the Apostles themselves, would not seem necessary, nor requisite, nor, it may be, at all desirable. But as for those that are not of such an Apostolical Spirit, as the generality of the world are not, or rather very few are, that of *S. John* having continued true in all ages in a manner, *ὁ κόσμος ὅλος ἐν πονηρίᾳ καὶ τῷ*, *The whole world lies soaked in wickedness*; in these this glorious setting out, this fair and glittering Morning will assuredly very suddenly prove a foul Day.

1 John 5. 19.

There being therefore such Temporal prizes to be aimed at, such several sorts and degrees of Dignities, to the very top of the highest Sovereignty over the world, all mens spirits will be inflamed with the desire and pursuit

pursuit of what lies so temptingly in their view, and that hellish fire of Ambition will be the very life and soul of the Church; all her activity and motion deriving it self from that hatefull Principle. Whence it will follow that nothing but the name of *Spirituality* will be left, the minds of the Clergie being totally drawn off from meditating what is true, holy and edifying, and quite drown'd and immerst in the affairs of the world.

For such are also *Ecclesiastick Preferments*, when they are sought after to satisfie the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

11. Nor will this mischief stop here, I mean in the neglect of Holy and Divine Meditation, and of either usefull or generous Enquiries after Truth; but every one being exalted in the conceit and apprehension of his own place and dignity, especially he whose Superiority is so vast as to pretend to be the *Universal Bishop of Christendom*, and higher then all the Kings of the Earth, they will be driven on so far with that furious spirit of *Ambition*, that they will not onely neglect, but oppose, every thing that is sacred and holy, if it stand in competition with any devised method of getting in Riches to the Church, that they may Lord it, and carry it out bravely, every man in his respective Office and Dignity.

Wherefore the genuine Simplicity of Christian Religion shall be corrupted and adulterated, and Laws and Articles devised by this *Infallible* Priesthood, that are point-blank against the Laws of Christ and the immutable Rules of sound Reason: The ears of all men will be filled with deceitfull Figments and gainfull Lies, such as we have already produced many Instances of; the Merits of Christ's Passion vilified and maimed; Truth and Justice banished, persecuted and oppressed; the Old and New Testament made but a dumb and dead letter that has no sense nor information in it, but all Dictates must be immediate from the Church that is resolved to dictate nothing that is against her worldly advantage: that is to say, The two Witnesses must be slain, and their carcasses lie breathless in the streets; otherwise those that dwell on the Earth (not those that are redeemed from the Earth, and have their conversation in Heaven) will not be able to rejoyce in such a measure, and to send gifts to one another, that is, mutually support and promote one anothers Interest, and merrily share the World amongst themselves.

Apoc. 11.

12. It is plain therefore that such a *Luciferian* Polity as this would of its own nature clash with the Kingdom of Christ, and totally defeat that Grand design of the Gospel, which is the *Renewing of the World in true Righteousness and Holiness*. For thus even those which should be the *Salt of the Earth* will of all men become the most unfavoury; every mans judgment being bribed by either the present possession or earnest expectation of such vast and extravagant Preferments; of which there being so many degrees, the minds of the ambitious will find no rest till they come to the highest that is possible, and therefore will be necessarily entangled and taken up with worldly projects, even as long as they live, and that with great vehemence and sollicitude; the Objects seeming so great, and making so glaring a show in their phancies. And Ambition and Pomp in all ranks rendring them indigent of Money, no inferior Candidate

Candidate can attempt the corrupting of the Superiour Authority without success, and every one betime will get as much of Church-preferment as he can, to be able to buy more.

Wherefore by Law or Dispensation men shall be inabled to hold not onely many Benefices, but Bishopricks, besides other Dignities in the Church; by which means no Shepherd will be able to attend his own flock, but, instead of feeding them with wholesome Doctrine, will help the Devil to infuse the worst poison that can be conveyed into mens minds, namely, That the whole business of Religion is but a device to enrich the Priest. Thus necessarily and unavoidably by their absence and silence will they preach and inculcate Atheism and Infidelity into their scandalized Clergie. For if the *Salt it self become thus unsavoury*, what better can become of that which it is to season? Will not Leudness and Irreligion overflow all?

13. To be short, All mens minds upon the reckoning being inflamed with Pride and Ambition, and no mans Ambition being to be served without mony; the Temple of God will, as in times past, be filled with buyers and sellers, and the Church become a very Mart or Fair, the Ecclesiastick Polity a City of Merchandises, and every particular Church a Merchant's Ship or Vessel of Traffick, amidst the populousity of the World, which the Prophetick style resembles to *many waters*.

But I will harp no longer on this string. I have already made a Description full enough of such a Constitution or Frame of the Church as would in an universal manner oppose or disappoint the planting or growth of the *Divine Life*, whereby it does sufficiently shew it self to be extremely *Antichristian*.

CHAP. VIII.

1. *That such a Frame of things as naturally tends to the extinguishing of Faith is highly Antichristian.*
2. *That A trade of Worldliness in the Spiritual Guides is one part of this Frame.*
3. *And a Self-ended policy in all the Doctrines and Practices of this Church, another.*
4. *Thirdly, The profession of uncertainty and obscurity in the Christian Faith;*
5. *Fourthly, The necessity of being in a Church where there is no Interruption by misordination.*
6. *Fifthly, The bearing men down that Dissent in any thing takes away certainty in all things.*
- 7,—12. *Sixthly, Lying Miracles.*
- 13,—16. *Seventhly, A rabble of incredible Reliques.*
17. *Eighthly, Transsubstantiation.*
18. *How naturally it super-induces Atheism.*
19. *What a bundle of Impossibilities it is.*
20. *That the pretended Infallibility of the Church is infinitely too light to weigh against it:*
21. *Nor can it be made credible by the countenance of feigned Miracles.*
22. *Several Characters of them that are excluded the Holy City, comprized in this present Limb of Antichristianism.*

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1. **W**E will now proceed to those main parts of the *Divine Life*, the *Root* and the *Branches*. Where it is obvious to take notice that what deads the *Root*, whereby the whole Tree must necessarily wither, cannot but be Antichristian to the highest pitch. Wherefore if I describe such a management of Affairs in the Church as naturally tends to the extinguishing of *Faith*, which is the necessary *Root* of the other Divine Graces, no man will doubt but that I have delineated a very considerable Limb of *Antichristianism*.

2. Of which the first point is what we last of all touched upon: Such a Frame of Government, and such sublimities of Dignities, as would lapse the Church, and immerse it into the World, and thereby make them that should be *the Salt of the Earth*, an unfavoury masse, and of a secular, dead, insipid spirit, relishing nothing of the Kingdom of God, but wholly taken up with the Profits and Promotions of this present life. For they would thereby look so like *Unbelievers* themselves, that they would stagger the *faith* of all those under them, and make them think that there was nothing to be expected after this life, because their Leaders and Guides lived so exactly according to that Principle, *That there is nothing to be expected hereafter*.

3. Secondly, The Exquifiteness of their Order and Policy in managing the affairs of their Ecclesiastick Empire, if it did surpass all the Cunning and Industry of Secular Princes, and if all those Doctrines and Duties which were most urged and most frequently came into practice were of such a nature as did plainly tend to the either Honour, Power or Profit of the Priesthood; This, I say, would strike very far towards the making the World Infidels, or believers of nothing but this, That the Summe of our Religion is but a witty Invention of so many fictitious Stories, Doctrines, Precepts and Ceremonies, which would serve to hamper the Consciences of men, and make the World more Governable; but so shaped out by the Priests, as made most for their worldly advantage. And such we have already described the Tenents and Doctrines of this Church to be, continually displaying the *Frauds* and *Self-endedness* of all their Errors and Mispractices, and need not here again repeat them.

4. Thirdly, This also would oppose the Christian *Faith*, To make the nature of it such, that it must be always doubtfull. Of which I must confess I know not what may be the fetch, unless it be to keep mens Minds, as some deceitfull Physicians and Surgeons do their Bodies, in such an unsound and valetudinarianous condition, that they may have the more frequent recourse to them, and depend the more upon them: or because they mixe some things in Religion necessarily to be believed, which it is impossible they should be firmly believed by any but fools, And thus the true and solid points of Christianity, such as have sufficient evidence to convince any man of Reason, must be reputed obscure and uncertain for being found in the company of such gross Falsties or Uncertainties, which yet pretend to an equal right of entire reception with the clearest Truths.

And further, It is no wonder that such a Church as places whatever certainty

certainly there is of Faith upon her own *Infallibility*, as if that were the ground of it, should derive both an opinion and profession of the *Uncertainty of Belief* upon her Nurseries; they having no better ground then what we have so plainly demonstrated already to be hollow and ruinous.

But it is their onely Shift and Refuge, to make their *Infallibility* the ground of Belief, the matters they propose to be believed having no recommendation either from Scripture or their own nature to be embraced. And therefore things being thus uncertain at the bottom, upon their Principles, they must instead of a firm and solid Faith be content with an obscure and uncertain one. Which is indeed the destroying of *Christian Faith*, and the substituting of a more vertiginous fluctuation of mind in lieu thereof.

5. Fourthly, That Principle also tends to the ruining of *Faith*, which supposes That without right Succession of Bishops and Priests there is no true Church, and therefore no true Faith; and that this Succession may be interrupted by the misordination or misconsecration of a Priest or Bishop, the persons thus ordained or consecrated being Atheists or Jews, or ordained by them that are so, or do out of malice not intend what they ought in the *Sacrament of Orders*, as some call it. Which were a conceit able to turn all men *Scepticks* concerning their state in Religion; but is a Position absolutely against inward sense and Reason. As if a man could not feel in his own conscience whether he believed or not the Truths of Holy Scripture, without he were first assured that he was a member of that Church that had an uninterrupted lawfull Succession of the Priesthood from the Apostles times till his own. Whenas there is nothing more immediate to a man then *inward sense*, which it is not in the power of any Sophistry ever to confute.

6. Wherefore though this Position may be spitefully levelled against the *Certainty of Faith*, yet the execution it can doe upon the considerate is very inconsiderable and small: much like that peevish Supposition of the necessity of *Unity of Opinion*; as if those Churches that did differ in any thing, had the certainty of nothing. An excellent Hypothesis indeed, were it but true, and such as would effectually recommend the usefulness of an *Infallible Judge of Controversies*, if he could be had for love or money, by whom they might closely compact the parts of the Church Catholick together, as with cramps of Iron.

But there is no such force in the Theorem, which will of it self fall asunder into dust, if we consider it can stand upon no other terms then what will supplant the truth of all Reason and Religion in the world; the whole world being divided in their judgments and conclusions concerning both. Whence it is plain that the Attempt, though weak, tends to the bringing in *universal Scepticism* in all things. In which deluge the *Christian Faith* would be also drowned, and perish with all other Truths, there being no Ark left to take Sanctuary in, and to be safe from the working and absorptive waves of this reciprocating *Euripus*.

7. But sixthly, and I shall now instance in what is not onely ill-meant, but must needs have a successfull efficacy for making the World *Atheists* or

or *Infidels*; and that is, The glutting of them with *lying Miracles*, and gulling of them with delusions and confusing devices, call them *pious Frauds* or by what other fine names you please. For the *Falseness* being once discovered in such a Church as requires to be believed more upon their own Authority and Infallibility than upon the credibility of the matters which they propound, I say, if they once be taken tandy in Forgeries and guilefull Fictions in any points, especially such as tend to their own profit, how can this fall of shaking or rather ruining the whole Frame of belief to the very Foundations? How ruinous then must the *Christian Faith* be, where such Lies and Figments are frequent, and almost as frequently discovered by those that are more nasute? Certainly *Atheism* and *Infidelity* must break in upon such a Church as the Sea upon the cutting of the Banks.

8. That I may the better be understood, I will give you some brief Instances of these impudent Figments. As, for example, "If they should have the face to tell the people, that such a Saint, when his Head was struck off, walked four or five mile with it in his hand, onely resting himself every mile's end to take breath at his open weasen-pipe. That another Saint being hospitably entertained at the expence of the lives of a Cow and a Calf, restored them again to life, and that they were both of them found the next day in their Master's Meadows. That by another Saint the Devil was seen behind the Altar busily writing down mens sins in a parchment, which being something too scant, he stretched with his teeth, and his hold slipping, knocked his head against the wall, That a certain She-Saint being swallowed by a Dragon, she making a Crosse in the Dragon's belly, burst him in pieces, and so was delivered. That a Bishop having cut off his own hand upon its being polluted by the kisse of some over-affectionate female, it was suddenly set on again, and healed by prayers addressed to the Blessed Virgin. The like whereof happened to another Saint whose legs were cut off at the knees : and to the head of another, which being cut off, sprung up and grew on again, but lopt off the second time, by its fall gave the rise to a Fountain or Well. And lastly, that another She-Saint being by ropes to be haled to execution, was so strong upon Crossing herself and calling upon the Virgin *Mary*, that a whole Team of Oxen could not drag her to the place.

9. But I have not yet done. That also would be a delicious Figment concerning some Saints, that they have had personal converse with the Virgin *Mary*, and that she has been so kind to some, that she has emptied her Breasts into their mouths on their sick beds to their unspeakable comfort. It were likewise a good roofing miracle, and bigger then belief, that a certain Holy House of the Virgin's should be carried out of *Palestine* into *Italy* by an invifible hand through the aire. Surely the Angels of God would be very worthily employ'd in removing fuch ftone-work and timber-work. For a *Crucifix* also to take fome fifty miles journey through the fame element in a night, were a pretty Figment to furnifh out the Faith of Fools. The fpeaking alfo of *Crucifixes* would help to make up the number of thefe either Delufions or Incredibilities.

10. To which miraculous Loquacity you may adde those more
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silent fictions of Dreams; The making of marriages betwixt Christ and some Women-Saints; The making *Images* to rowl their eyes, to weep also, and to sweat; The Histrionical Scenes of exorcizing upon compact betwixt the feignedly possessed and the Exorcist; Fictitious Stories to set out the wondrous virtue of the *Masse*, and great holiness thereof: as That the first words that have been spoken by Infants have been, *To Masse, To Masse*; That it has fed the absent, when they have fasted twenty days; struck the Chains miraculously from the legs of Captives: That at every clinking of the mony, at an *offertory*, in the bason, a Soul leaps out of Purgatory: That the Host being taken by one not fasting has transformed him into the shape of an Horse or Swine.

There might be also fine devices for the magnifying of the Holiness of the *Priest*, in making such things as come from his body seem to have the virtue of scaring away the Devil: As suppose the Devil be made to appear more impatient when the Priest's glove, hose, girdle, or shirt be applied to any part of the possessed; which may be *ex pacto*, as well as in the conciliating the opinion of such virtues in the *Image* or *Reliques* of this or that Saint. But how stupendiously Blessed and Holy must that Priest seem to be, who could make the people believe that he was himself possessed with the Blessed Trinity! And how Sacred must that She-Saint appear, betwixt whom and Christ *Jesus* there was that dear-ness of affection, that they wore one anothers Hearts interchangeably, Christ's Heart being conveyed into her body, and her Heart into his!

11. The counterfeiting also of *Apparitions* were a trim way to cut off the belief of there ever having been any true ones. And therefore it would be a very Antichristian piece of Knavery for any Priest to use any such jugglings under what pious pretence so ever: As by putting on some Histrionical accoutrements to act the part of an Angel, or of the blessed Virgin descended from Heaven in glory, or of some Ghost from the Infernal parts with wan and ghastly looks, and cold and earthly hands; and in these disguises to visit the perplexed, for either the corroborating of them in the belief of that Religion which they have already entertained, or for the recommendation of that Religion they endeavour to proselyte them to. Another Example of which kind would be, the contrivance of moving Lights in Church-yards, by fastning wax-Candles on the backs of live Crab-fishes, which must be interpreted the unquiet Souls of them that are tortured in Purgatory, and seek relief by the Prayers and Offerings of good people.

12. To which you may adde the setting out the state of *Purgatory* with such extravagant Poetical Fabulofities, [as the roasting of Souls against the fire, frying them in frying-pans, the pulling them in pieces with hot pincers, the flesh from the bone, the baptizing them in flaming pitch and brimstone and scalding metalls; their being bit by the venomous teeth of great Serpents; their being transformed into black horses; the pouring down melted Mony into their mouths, and then forcing them to vomit it up again, that it may be again poured in by these officious Fiends; with many such incredible schemes of Torture,

Torture, from which there is appointed no deliverance but by *Pardons*, *Masses*, *Oblations*, and the like, that is to say, without some worldly benefit accreuing to the Church:] Certainly such a description as this of *Purgatory*, or a *Third place*, must naturally engender a misbelief of all *Three*, and make men think there is neither *Heaven* nor *Hell* after this Life, but that all are but *Figments* and *Inventions*, for the benefit of the Priest, especially, as I have already intimated, these things being taught in that Church who make *their own Credit* and *Authority* the main, if not onely, prop of Faith.

13. But I will also describe a seventh way, which is marvellously effectual to extinguish the *Christian Faith* amongst men; and that is *A Rabble of incredible Reliques* which might be obtruded upon their beliefs; the reverential sight whereof bringing in a daily gain to the Church, would be a plain demonstration they will not stick to lie for their advantage: which if they doe very grossely and deprehensibly here, how can it fail of ruining *Faith* in all other matters of Religion?

But this point is better understood by certain Instances. "As if, for example, they should pretend to shew that very *Hay* that was in the "Cratch wherein our Saviour was lay'd, and more then one Tail of the "Ass on which he rode in Triumph to *Jerusalem*: The Stones also "that killed *S. Stephen*, as well as the Arrows whereby *S. Sebastian* was "wounded. If they should pretend to shew the Virgin *Mary's* Smock, as "well as *Joseph's* Pantofles and Breeches; some of the five Barly-loaves "and two Fishes with which Christ fed five thousand men in the Wilder- "ness; some of the Bloud and Water that flowed out of his side at his "Suffering; as also some of that very Ground that Christ stood upon "when he ascended into Heaven: The Hair and Bloud of *S. John Baptist*, and the Hair-cloath that he wore: The Table upon which "Christ ate his last Supper, the Stool which he sate upon, and the Towel "wherewith he wiped his Disciples feet.

14. "The Picture of Christ painted upon a wall by the finger of "God, and another drawn by *Nicodemus* while the Jews were beating "of him: The Fore-skin also of Christ, his Navel-string, and Se- "cundine in which he was wrapt in the Womb: Also Christ's Hand- "kerchief, and the Shirt which the blessed Virgin made for him; as like- "wise the Cradle in which he was rocked.

15. "Furthermore the Virgin *Mary's* Veil with which she used to "cover her head, her Comb, her Hair, her Girdle, her Needles, sowing "Thread and Work-basket; nay the very House in which she dwelt and "wrought, transported (as I said before) out of *Palestine* into *Italy* by "the hands of Angels: The Reed with which they smote *Jesus*, the "Rope with which they haled him to execution, the very Sponge also "with which the Jews gave him vinegar mingled with gall to drink, "and some of the Coin for which *Judas* betrayed him; nay the very "Lantern he used in that work of darkness, and the Dice where- "with the Souldiers play'd for Christ's seamless Coat. Moreover the "pure Bloud of Christ, and the Milk of *Mary* his Mother kept in glasses.

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"The Pillar also at which Christ was whipped, and the Stairs or Steps on which he went up into the Judgment-Hall, and some of the Thorns wherewith he was crowned. An Image of the Virgin Mary made by S. Luke, to which an Angelical Statue of Marble was seen often to bow. The paring of the nails of a living dead Crucifix, and the lively Picture of Christ made by himself by the pressing onely of a Napkin to his face when he sweat.

16. "What would the world say to the credibility of three Tuns of Teeth from the Jaws of one Saint; to the producing of the very Dagger and Shield with which S. Michael fought with the Devil, and a Feather that might then haply fall out of one of the Angel's Wings? What to the shewing of the Skull of a Saint's head at one place, his Hair in another, his Jaw-bone in another, his Forehead in a fourth, and yet his whole Head in a fifth? What to the Fore-skin of Christ shewn also in five several places at once? What to some dozens of Nails wherewith Christ was nailed to the Cross, and as many pieces of the Cross as would load a Cart to carry them; and as many glasses of the Virgin's Milk as would fill all the vessels in a countrey-dairy? How can such gross Impostures as these but wipe the Priests lips clean of all credit and belief, and cast the world into desperate *Atheism* and *Infidelity*?

17. But eighthly, and lastly, The Incredible of all Incredibles and the greatest Impossibility of all Impossibilities were that pretended Mystery of *Transubstantiation*, which being urged with the like necessity and assurance of Truth that any thing is urged by this Antichristian Church, whose Picture I am a-drawing, will doe the most fatal execution upon the *Christian Faith* that any thing imaginable can doe. For supposing this the most Fundamental Article of their Creed, or, if you will, the most precious and the most seriously-urged Fundamental of them all, and the very hinde of almost all their publick Devotion and God-service; if this break, all must fall to the ground. For if the Church be found shamelessly false in so important a Point as this, it does immediately follow that she will be believed in nothing.

Wherefore they whose belief was either wholly or mainly supported by the seeming greatness of her Authority, this failing by the easy discovery of so gross a Falsehood, ('and yet by her most earnestly and most seriously avowed for Truth,) the Faith of every such man must also necessarily fail, unless by some special grace of God assisting his conference with the persons or writings of some better-instructed Christians, which he may haply meet with in this vast Wilderness he wanders in, he be stoppt from splitting himself a-pieces from this dangerous precipice he stands on, and from the plunging himself into the mire of *Atheism* and *Unbelief*.

18. For undoubtedly if he have no other help but this Pseudo-christian Synagogue, though he may be awed by their external lash from professing his *Infidelity*, yet it will be impossible for him to hinder the tacit growth of it in his own Soul; but he will naturally

naturally disgust and disclaim all hearty commerce with Religion, and even loath it as a pack of lies.

Wherefore it is impossible but this congregation of Impostours and Deceivers (which I am setting forth in the truest colours I can) should swarm with multitudes of grown and obdurate *Atheists*. For the Imposture we speak of now being so signal, and the discovery so easy and obvious, how can it chuse but be discovered even by multitudes of people?

For the account comes onely to this, Whether it be more likely that the Church for her own advantage (which I perceive she does every-where eagerly and stiffly pursue) may knowingly and wittingly impose upon me, or at least mistake in her own judgment, (of the *Infallibility* whereof I have no proof but her own boast, when it is in the mean time her Interest to boast so) I say, the account comes onely to this, Whether it be more likely that she may practise fraud, or fall into a mistake out of some blind Superstition; or that by the uttering of *Five words* a Priest should have such a power as to turn a piece of *Bread* into a *Man*, the *Bread* according to all my Senses being as much *Bread* as it was before. Which is a double Miracle, and greater then ever was yet done in the world considered but thus far, and almost as great a Miracle that any one should believe it.

19. But there are still greater, I cannot say *Miracles*, but downright *Impossibilities*. As first, "That this Bread is not turned into a Man that was to be, but that was already in being: Which is the hardest Non-sense that can be offered to the mind of man to think upon. And yet, in the second place, the Bread is so turned into a Man, that is to say into the Man Christ, that he is entirely in every place where this consecrated Bread seems to be, that is; in thousands of places at once at very large distances: Which is as perfect a Contradiction as any can be proposed, That one and the same Body should be entirely distant from it self. For how can it be *One*, being thus divided from it self; since *Unity* consists in *Indivision*, and *Self-Unity* certainly is *Self-Indivision*? Wherefore if there be one Self at *Oxford*, suppose, and another at *Cambridge* at the same time, it is impossible it should be one and the same Person; their distance or division demonstrating them two distinct ones. And thirdly and lastly, From this false supposition, *That one and the same Body may be at the same time in several places*, it will also follow, That one and the same Person or Body may be at the same time wholly within it self and wholly without it self, wholly above it self and wholly beneath it self, on the right hand of it self and on the left hand of it self: That it may be *one* Body, and yet *many* Bodies at once, or rather no Body, but a Spirit, or, to speak more truly, Nothing: That one and the same Person may meet himself and complement himself, may at the same time move and rest, lie along and walk, be many miles absent from his friend and present with him at once, may be now in Heaven and then in a moment on the Earth, without passing any of the Regions betwixt; with many such like Incongruities, which we having above noted, it is needless any longer here to insist upon.

20. It is already plain enough that *Transubstantiation*, or the turning of the Bread into the very Body of Christ, is encumbered with so many and so manifestly gross Impossibilities and easily deprehensible, that the Impossibility of the Church's either ignorantly erring or voluntarily imposing upon men for her own gain, can bear no weight at all to turn the scales in her behalf; but there will be such an irresistible moment of these apparent and plain Contradictions of this so boldly obtruded Article of the Church, I mean this of *Transubstantiation*, that the weight thereof will naturally sink all her sons that but a little consider of it (if nothing better then their Church help them and buoy them up) into the abhorred pit of Infidelity first, and then of Hell.

21. For there is no plastering over such Impossibilities (which are deprehended to be such according to the Universal and Immutable Laws of Reason) by feigned Miracles, to give countenance thereto. As if they should make such Stories as these; "That the Sacrament being struck with a dagger, did bleed: That when the Bread, as was thought, was taken out of the mouth of the Communicant, it proved *Flesh* in the fingers of the Priest: That the Host has dropt many drops of blood upon the Corporall, as it has been taken into the Priest's hands: That it has flown out of his hands round about the Church, dropping drops of blood on the Marble pavement all the time of its flight: That a lovely fair Child has been seen sometimes to appear out of the consecrated Bread; and the like. For these Stories could not evince the truth of that which is impossible to be true, but would argue their own falseness by the end of their producement. For commonly liars back lies with lies.

22. And now I think I have described so plentifully and punctually this particular Limb of *Antichristianism*, which is opposite to the Root of the Divine Life, *Faith*, that nothing can be conceived wanting to the perfection of such a Contrariety, nor any man doubt but that Church which is thus described is really one and the same with that which is excluded out of the *New Jerusalem*, as being opposite to her inhabitants.

* Chap. 21. &
Chap. 22.

For from such a Constitution of things as I have here in this member of *Antichristianism* set forth, it will plainly follow, that the professed sons of this false Church (as those in the * *Apocalyps*) must be *δεδουλωμένοι*, *δεδουλωμένοι*, *ἢ ψευδοί*, and *οἱ πονηροὶ ἢ φιλόσοφοι ψευδοί*: that is to say, They must either be men whose spirits are intimidated with superstitious Fables, which are the *δεδουλωμένοι* the fearfull, and the *οἱ φιλόσοφοι ψευδοί*, such as *love to hear lies*, and believe vain things out of a sottishness and imbecillity of mind, and brutish simplicity; or else they must be *ἀπιστοί*, *Unbelievers* and *Atheists*, though they externally for their own peace sake submit to the Orders of their Church; or, lastly, they must be the *ψευδοί*, or *οἱ πονηροὶ ψευδοί*, such as *forge lies*, and help to deceive the people with multifarious Falsehoods and Impostures. Which being the Characters of that Church which is opposite to the *Holy City*, it is a farther Indication that in the putting together these things that do so diametrically oppose or undermine the *Christian Faith*, we have truly described a notorious Limb of *Antichristianism*.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

1. Humility the proper Characteristick of the Person and Spirit of Christ.
2. The Affectation of an Ecclesiastick Sovereignty contrary to this Divine Grace.
3. The pretence for this Ambition, That the visible Church being One, requires one visible Head; with the Answer thereto.
4. Further Reasons to prove the Church wants no visible Head besides Christ.
5. That this one Head Christ Jesus, and one Apostolick Law, does make the Church sufficiently One.
6. That there is no just pretence for any such claim of being this Universal Head in any Bishop.
7. But that Ambition may purchase such a Title by wicked practices.
8. The method of this Universal Bishop's enslaving the Clergie to himself, and undermining the Secular Powers.
9. His Frands against the Emperour and other Princes.
10. A further description of the Frands, Rapine and Pride of this Universal Pastour, and of his Usurpation in a manner of the whole Power of the Empire.

1. **W**E proceed now to the Description of as lively Opposition as we can to the First Branch of the Divine Life, namely, Humility, which being so special a Characteristick of the nature and Genius of Christ's own Spirit, and so pronounced by himself in his own person when he was upon Earth (*Learn of me, for I am humble and meek*;) that which is perfectly opposite to this must needs be exquisitely *Anti-christian* in all manner of people, but especially in those that do in a more peculiar way presume themselves to be Successors of Christ and his Apostles, whom he of old premonished of Pride and Lordliness, and affectation of Superiority; saying, *The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them: But it shall not be so among you, &c.*

Mat. 11. 29.

Luke 22.

Mark 10.

Which lesson Peter remembered, and endeavoured to transmit it to others, where he advises the Pastours to feed their flocks, not for *filthy Lucre*, but of a ready mind; neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. How contrary therefore to this would it be, if some pretended Supreme Pastour (whom others in their severall subordinate capacities would in proportion naturally imitate) should not onely Lord it over his flock, but tyrannize over Kings and Emperours, and Lucifer-like place himself in the same Throne with God and Christ, or rather displace them, and domineer absolutely according to his own will, treading under foot the plainly promulgated Laws of God?

1 Pet. 5. 2, 3.

2. Let us therefore dip our pencil a little deeper in some of those colours which we made use of in the Description of that member of *Anti-christianism* which was opposite to the Divine Life in general, and pourtray out more fully such an Ecclesiastick Policy as will appear most oriently *Luciferian* and *Anti-christian*; and most diametrically opposite to that holy Humility that was recommended by Christ to his Successors.

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cessours.

cessours. We will therefore suppose, as before, some one Prelate, that has got the start of the rest, to put in for the Title and Authority of *Universal Bishop*: which whosoever does was declared by *Gregory* the Great the *Fore-runner of Antichrist*, the Fore-runner of that *Rex Superbia cui Sacerdotum preparatur exercitus*. Which is a sign that in *Gregory's* judgment *Antichrist* was not to be born of the Tribe of *Dan*, but of the Tribe of *Levi*; whom we will further suppose to lay about him for the obtaining of this *Levitical* Sovereignty, and for the advancement of his Episcopal Chair successively, in some such manner as follows.

3. First, he will pretend that it is unfit that the visible Catholick Church being *one*, should not be united under *one visible Head*. Which reasoning yet, though it make a pretty show at first sight, being closely looked into, will vanish into smoke: For this is but a quaint conceit urged in the behalf of an impossibility. For the erecting such an Office for one man, which no one man in the world is able to perform, implies that to be possible which is indeed impossible. Whence it is plain that the *Head* will be *too little for the Body*, which therefore will be a piece of mischievous Asymmetry or Inconceivability also. No one Mortal can be a competent *Head* for that Church which has a right to be *Catholick*, and to over-spread the face of the whole Earth. There can be no such *Head* but *Christ*, who is not mere Man, but God invested in Humane nature, and therefore is present with every part of his Church and every member thereof at what distances soever.

But to set some one Bishop over the whole Church, were to suppose that great Bishop of our Souls absent from it, who has promised *he will be with her to the end of the World*; and, you may be sure, not an idle Spectator, but a careful Feeder and Governour of their Souls who do really believe in him and unfeignedly obey him.

4. Nor does the Church-Catholick on Earth lose her *Unity* hereby; for she is under *one common Head* of the whole Church as well Triumphant as Militant, which (to come nearer to the Objection) is a *Visible Head* of his Church to those that can approach his Court, in that glorious Metropolis in Heaven; where undoubtedly he is to be seen sitting on his Sapphire Throne in great Majesty and Glory, and where his true Subjects in a small space of time may either see him themselves, or at least converse with them that have frequent recourse unto him and wait in his presence.

And no man, I think, will say that any large Empire has an *Invisible Head*, because the Emperour himself has placed his Palace in the chiefest Province of his Empire, and never comes within the view of some parts of his Dominion, and multitudes of men never see him, as never having the opportunity of visiting those parts where the Emperour's Court is. Whereas *Jesus Christ*, the *Head of his Church*, was seen here on Earth for a good space, as also visibly to travel hence into the higher Regions of his Kingdom, and in due time will visibly return hither again, to take account of the Administrators of his Affairs in these lower Provinces. Wherefore Christ is a more *visible Head* in his large Empire than any Emperour in his: So evident is it that there wants no *One Visible Head* of the Church, besides Christ himself.

5. But

5. But yet notwithstanding all this, this ambitious Patriarch I describe will bear the world in hand, that it is very fit there should be *One visible Head of the Church Universal*, which should succeed Christ, or rather some one whom he would pretend to be Prince of the Apostles, and that his Seat is that Apostolical Seat, and that there is a necessity for Unity in the Church, and for settling all controversies there should be some one such; though the Plea to any indifferent man cannot but seem very weak and frivolous. For, as I have already intimated, the Church will be sufficiently *One* by being under that *One Head Christ Jesus*, and under *One Law*, which is the *Word of God*, which has been already proved sufficiently plain in all things necessary to Life and Salvation. But for other things, whether *Ceremonies* or *Concepts*, they do not at all break the *Unity* of Christ's Kingdom, but it will be truly and conspicuously his, so long as it professes the Faith of his Apostles; let them otherwise use what difference of *Rites*, they will, or differ as much as they can in *unnecessary Opinions*: provided always that none of these *Rites* or *opinions* be really and plainly against the Apostolical Doctrines, which are the universal and irreversible Law of Christ's Empire upon Earth. For thus the *Church-Catholick* being in this sort variegated in *Externals*, will yet be visibly the *Spouse of Christ*, though *impurum nuptia*, though clothed with a Vestment of various flower-work and colours.

6. But for this high-flown Patriarch to pretend that his Seat is this *Infallible and All-decisive Apostolical Seat*, is a Plea that can have nothing solid at the bottom. For if there had been any such Prelation of some one of the Apostles over the rest, it were of that great Moment (if ending of Controversies in all succeeding Ages be of that Moment) that it would have been recorded in the Scripture, and would have ended or prevented all disceptations amongst the Apostles themselves or any others concerning them. But quite contrary *S. Paul* declares that *he is in nothing inferior to the chiefest Apostles*; which plainly implies an Equality amongst them all.

2 Cor. 12.

Besides, if it were so that some one Apostle had an Authority or Headship over the rest, and had once his Residence in such a particular See; it does not follow that he that succeeds him in that See should succeed him in that Headship, or at all in his Apostleship, but only in his Bishoprick: Nor is it credible that if this Prime and *Oecumenical* Apostle had designed his immediate Successour to the same latitude of Jurisdiction, that the claim should not be made and acknowledged by the Universal Church in those more innocent and more rigorous times. Of so little weight are such pretences as these.

7. But if such pretty Sophisms will not serve the turn, since Ambition has inflamed the Patriarch's spirit, he will leave no stone unmoved to accomplish his desire; and what Sophistry cannot do, must be effected, though by the coarsest methods of either Worldly or Infernal policy. That they may therefore obtain this absolute Ecclesiastick Sovereignty, the Successours in this pretended prime Apostolical See we will suppose to stick at nothing: But that they will forge or counterfeit Canons of Authentick

Authentick Councils, and make them speak for the Supremacy of their Patriarchate; that they will countenance, abet or allow Treasons and Murthers; though upon Emperours and Emperesses, Kings and Queens, and their whole Posterity, by some intrusted Instrument of State, whose ambition instigated him thus bloudily to assassinate his Liege Sovereign, that he might succeed him in his Kingdom or Empire. Whereupon notwithstanding, by parasitical fawning, conniving, or allowing, nay by congratulating the success of so beastly an enterprize, these eager Candidates for the Ecclesiastick Empire will not stick to endeavour to gain the good will of this new Usurper, though his hands be yet reeking with bloud, that they may thereby obtain of him this glorious and beneficial Title of *Universal Bishop*; nor upon the obtaining thereof forbear any cruelties to such Bishops as will detrect this new imposed yoke.

8. Which prize they having once gotten, we suppose they will not stick here, but will still by craft encroach upon the *Secular Power*. For this *Universal Bishop* will plausibly require an *Oath of Obedience* from all other Bishops in what Kingdoms soever; which is no less wickedness then to ensnare them in a way to treachery and perfidiousness to their own Sovereigns, and to make them indeed betrayers of their own liberty: For they being thus loosened and alienated from their proper Princes, are made indeed the more firm to this great *Patriarch Oecumenical*, but withall his surer Vassals to be dealt with in Impositions and Fees and what-ever other Injunctions, as he pleases.

For we suppose they will also wring out of the *Secular Princes* hand (upon pretence of their being the highest Sovereignty in *Ecclesiastick Affairs*) the Right of *Investitures*, thereby to make all Bishops less dependent on the *Temporal Sovereignty*, and more endeared to the *Apostolick See*, but still more enslaved thereto, as I noted before, and without remedy, if oppressed thereby, whether by removing all considerable *Appeals* out of the Bishop's Court respective into that Apostolick Judicature, or by what other aggrievances soever. But the Aggrievance of *Appeals* alone is so great, as if all Christendome were set on the rack, or, if you will, torturously drawn together with the Cramp, to fit the transaction of Affairs to the forced Universality and Interest of this *Vicar-General of Christ*. And yet it will be so according to this Hypothesis, to maintain the Pomp and Ambition of one Universal Domineering Prelate.

They will also get the whole body of the *Clergy* exempt from all *Secular Judicatures*; they being, indeed, by these successfull devices made properly the Subjects of this Ecclesiastick Monarch. But by this feat they do most grossly defraud all Secular Potentates of as many Subjects as there are men of Religious Orders in Christendom, they being *ipso facto* made the Subjects of this *King of Pride*, (as Gregory in a Divinatory rapture called him,) and not to be tried at any Secular Tribunal, no not for Murther, Robbery, House-breaking, or what other crime soever. Which Immunity, as it cannot but make them proud and insolent to the *Lazety*, as they call them; so must it, as I noted before, more thoroughly enslave the Clergie to this

this Ecclesiastick Tyrant. For they can rationally expect no succour from those Princes whose Sovereignty they have slip't from under, and consequently from under their Protection, by these Religious Frauds, and therefore lie wholly at the mercy of him whom the greatness of his Title and Pontifical Pomp, exceeding so infinitely his just Revenues, must make a severe exacter of Tribute from them that are most appropriately under his power, and thereby put them to unworthy shifts and shakings upon the people by pious, or rather impious, Sleights and Frauds, he sending out and dispersing these Birds of his in numerous flocks, to be his hungry Pick-peny's throughout the whole Pastorage of the Empire.

9. Thus great a Pride proportionably fed with the injury of others, and especially of the Bishops and other Clergie whom this Tyrannical high-Priest would pill and poll as he pleases, is discoverable already in the Draught we are a-making of this Member of *Antichristianism*. But it would be still heightened, if we should imagine further extravagancies. As suppose, if this Universal Priest should not be content to be *Supreme Bishop*, but put in to out-top the *Emperour* himself, and should most wretchedly and treacherously watch a safe occasion (as, suppose, while the Imperial forces are generously and faithfully employ'd to beat the Common Enemy out of Christendom, whether *Turks* or *Saracens*) to raise war against the Emperour and his adherents in those parts nearest his own See, to beat him thence, to make room for an opportunity of nimming away some share of the Empire to himself.

Certainly it were an high strain of *Ambition* that could move any to such *Devillish* practices. What then were it for this Cragging Prelate to send this or that Prince on holy Expeditions, on purpose to cheat them of their Dominions, or fleece them of their Revenues? What to absolve great Ministers of State and all the Subjects of a Prince from their Oaths of Fidelity, and that merely for his own Interest? To take upon him to depose the true Sovereign, and set up another, the lige Subject of the deposed, and who had no right at all to the Crown, for hope of a recompence proportionable to the greatness of his extravagant presumption, and for to enrich himself by the ruines of the injured? To be adored as an Omnipotent Plenipotentiary that may doe any thing, and to have his Clients fall down and kiss his feet, and his servants to carry him on their shoulders in procession like the ancient Idols of *Babylon*?

10. Nay, what shall we say to this *Holy man's* utterly ruining of the *Eastern Empire* to enrich himself with the rubbish? what to the forging Deeds of Gift or Donations, to cover over the odiousness of his Rapine? what to the leaving in a manner no Empire at all but what is *Sacerdotal*, raising it above all Kings, Emperours and Christian Princes whatsoever? and this achieved by such persons as were the most wicked of any that bore the name of *Sovereign Holiness*? whereby we may be the better assured of the *Antichristianism* of the Constitution, it being brought about and established by impure Sorcerers, Murtherers and Poisoners of Princes.

That power therefore which one single *Antichristian* Prelate shall thus procure,

procure, by frauds and rapines, by robbing Kings of their Rights, by subverting States and Kingdoms, by the inveigling the Sons of Emperours into Treason, Rebellion and Parricide, by absolving Subjects from their Oaths of Fealty, by involving Christendom in war and bloodshed, by that insolent presumption of Excommunicating Emperours and Potentates, (they not offending, yea firmly adhering to the Law of Christ) and by disposing of their Dominions as he pleases; if this, I say, be not a right *Idea* of that signal *Antichristian* Power perfectly opposite to that Equity, Sweetness, Meekness and Lowliness of spirit which was so conspicuous in Christ *Jesus*, even in his highest Triumph on Earth, I cannot, nor, I think, any one else, imagine what is.

We omit here all that rack of mind and torture of Conscience that the unmeasurable Sublimity of this *Prince of Pride* might put all Christendom upon by his vexatious and superstitious Opinions and Ceremonies, invented onely for the procuring jewel to feed and maintain the Grandeur and Pomp of so stately a *Magnifico*. All mens minds must be ground with Sollicitude, and their Purfes emptied to fill up and swell out the fastuous tumour of this *Prince-riding Patriarch*. Of which theme having spoken sufficiently in my Description of the Second Limb of *Antichristianism*, it was enough to mention it onely here.

CHAP. X.

1. *The wicked Method of raising the Power of this Supreme Pastour to this height, a demonstration of the excess of Ambition.*
2. *His blasphemous usurpation or acceptation of the Divine Titles.*
3. *His barbarous insultation over Excommunicated Kings and Emperours.*
4. *The excess of Homage done to him by the greatest Personages.*
5. *His exalting himself above God in point of Jurisdiction.*
6. *His elation of himself above him in point of Honour or Precedency.*
7. *Other Instances of that kind of Pride.*
8. *His exaltation of himself above God even in the very House of God literally so called.*

1. **WE** have already wrought up this *Image of Antichristianism* in the power of One particular Priest or Patriarch so high, as that by hook or by crook he has wriggled himself into the pretence, if not possession, of *Absolute Sovereignty over all the Potentates of Christendom*. Which being acquired by such wicked means, it must needs be that a more then Hellish Fire of *Ambition* lies at the bottom; which will betray it self yet more fully in these visible flames; namely, *Certain exorbitant Titles and Prerogatives this Son of Pride is adorned with, His barbarous insultations over subdued Princes and Emperours, and the extravagant Homages and Services done to his person in publick Solemnities.*

2. As for example, What can be more blasphemously Antichristian then to suffer himself to be decked with the spoils of the Divine Attributes,

Attributes; "To be styled our Lord God, *Optimum Maximum, & Supremum Nomen in ternis*, A God on Earth, A visible Deity; To have declared that his Tribunal and that of God is all one; That his Power is absolute; That what he does, he does as God, and not as Man; and That all must submit to his Decree, as being infallible; That he is all, and above all; That he has the disposing of Kingdoms, can pull down one, and set up another; That he can do all that God can do *claves non arripit*; That he can change the nature of things, make something of nothing, make Injustice Justice, and Wrong Right; That all Laws are in his breast; That he can dispense with the Canons of the Apostles and with the New Testament itself; That he is the Cause of Causes; That it is Sacrilege to doubt of his Power; That he has a Dominion over Angels, Purgatory and Hell; That he is the Monarch of the world, and exceeds the Imperial Majesty as much as the Sun does the Moon; and That he is to be adored by all the Potentates of the Earth. This is one blazing Eruption out of this infernal *Atna* of *Luciferian Ambition*.

3. The second was his *haughty Insultation over Excommunicated and subdued Princes*. As for example, "It were most salvagely Antichristian, for this Triumphant Patriarch after Excommunication, and submission to his power, thereupon to make one Emperour to wait some days together bare-foot, and clad in Canvass, with his Empress, for Absolution at his gate; and that in the midst of winter; to make him resign his Imperial Ornaments; and after all this to depose him, and give his Empire to another: To make another prostrate himself publicly in the Church, and in this prostration to set his foot on the Emperour's neck, as if he were crushing an Adder or Snake: To crown another, not with his hands, but with his feet, and then with the same feet to kick the Crown from off the Emperour's head: To make one Prince resign his Crown, and live some days as a private person, and then, upon condition of becoming a Vassal to his High-priestship, to permit him to receive it again at his Legat's hands, lowly kneeling at his feet: To make another, by way of penance, to go creeping along his Holy-Highness's Palace upon his hands and knees, with a Collar about his neck like a Dog: To whip another stark naked in an open Cathedral, every Monk or Religious person bestowing some number of lashes on him. Certainly such gross usage as this of Emperours, Kings and Princes, cannot but be the Indication of a *Pride* and *Elation* of mind plainly Diabolical.

4. But what speak we of *Penances*, when we may draw so edifying a Draught out of ordinary expected *Homages* and *Observances*? We will therefore suppose that, according to the known Ceremonies of this *Sacerdotal Court*, "when his Holy-Highness, Universal Head of the Church, will be something still higher by getting on Horse-back, that the Emperour or King that is present must of duty hold his Stirrup as he gets up, or if his will is upon some occasion to be transported in a Chair of State, that the Emperour and King are to submit their neck to the yoke, and take up this stately Man in his Chair on their shoulders. When this grand Prelate also goeth to dinner, the Emperour or King

“there present must have the honour imposed upon them to serve him
 “with Water and a Towel to wash his anointed hands. For which service
 “vice they shall be permitted to sit down at Table after attendance, to
 “the first Course be served. The Emperour’s place also in an Oecumenical
 “Council shall be at this High-priest’s feet, like a good son of *Galilee*.
 “*liel*. And finally, wheresoever this *Oecumenical Patriarch* goes, the
 “people shall fall down on their knees, or if they do not that *Worship*
 “willingly and glibly, be knock’d down upon them by his rigid Guard
 “those grim extorters of the Adoration of this Idol.

5. This tenour of Ceremonies will plainly place this High-priest many
 degrees higher then the Princes of the Earth, be they Kings or Emperours,
 or what other Potentates soever. But we will now draw a stroke of
 two of such an *Elation or Haughtiness of spirit in point of Ceremonie and*
Precedency, as may make him justly seem to affect a *Sovereignty above*
that of God himself. Of which Affectation we have given substantial Examples
 as touching *Power*, in that he was supposed to cancel the Laws of
 God, and to substitute in their place some gainful Decrees of his own.
 Which is a perfect *exalting himself above God in point of Authority*
 and real Jurisdiction.

6. And for *point of good Manners and Ceremony*, If we should imagine
 that those things which himself and his adherents give the highest Religious
 Worship to were yet cast lower then this Supreme Prelate, were it not to
 take precedency of the most High God? As, for example, if the *Cross*
 which they judge *Latria* due to, were cast so low as this High-priest’s
 feet, were not he then higher then what the highest kind of Divine honour
 is due to? But this, you will say, perhaps, will but make him equal
 with God.

But the *Host or consecrated Bread* is already supposed to be esteemed
 by this Pseudo-Christian Church the very Body of Christ, or his corporeally
 real Person; that is to say, that where this is, Christ, true God, is truly and
 corporeally present in his own Person, as truly and really as he is in Heaven.
 If therefore this Person of Christ, which is ordinarily called the Holy Sacrament,
 should be less respected then the High-priest that consecrated it, it is plain
 that he were exalted above it.

Wherefore, for example, If in solemn Processions this High-priest
 should appoint the Ceremonies in such sort, as that this Sacrament, that
 is to say, according to them, the real Person of *Jesus*, should be placed
 amongst the less noble of the Pomp, but the High-priest himself in the midst
 of the most illustrious Princes; that *Jesus* Christ should be carried on a
 Horse, but the High-priest on the shoulders of Kings and Potentates; that
 a mean servant of the Sacrist shall lead the Horse that carries Christ
Jesus, but, if the High-priest be on horse-back at that time, some Prince
 or Emperour; that the Canopy over *Jesus* Christ shall be carried on
 by Citizens of the City, but the Canopy of the High-priest by great Nobles
 or Embassadors: Were not this plainly and palpably to take place of
God Almighty himself, and to be so proud an *Oecumenical Patriarch*
 as to prefer himself before the Eternal Father and Maker of the Universe?

7. Which might be done also in more ordinary journeyings; If this
 High

High-priest, suppose, should appoint *Jesus* Christ to ride on an ordinary Gennet led by an ordinary Stable-groom, and to go before, (there is *Precedency* indeed) but amongst the baggage of his Retinue, (*Calones, Lixas, & Curtesannas*) to be an Harbinger of his holy Highness's coming; himself in the mean time marching fairly on, accompanied with Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, and such like persons of Quality.

Surely this would suggest to any musing man a very deep conceit or profound meditation, to wit, how one and the same person according to his circumscribed bodily presence should, at one and the same time, ride on Horse-back here on Earth disgracefully and contemptibly amongst those Scullions and Curtesans, and yet sit in a Throne of Majesty and Glory in the highest Heavens, incircled with the Praises and Adorations of the Holy Angels.

But be that how it will, it is in the mean time very manifest that this sublime Priest is so far out in good manners, as well as in usurpation of real right of Jurisdiction, that he does *elate himself above God himself*, according to his own concession, or doctrine of his Church, in appointing thus to himself more honour than to the Itinerant Person of Christ.

8. To all which we might further adde this supposition also, That this High-priest at his Inauguration into this Supreme Office might be placed upon the Holy Altar of Christ in some chief Church of his Metropolis, the feet of his Chair of State trampling upon the Sacred Throne of the Body of Christ, and there receive Adoration from his Ecclesiastick Princes and the gazing and amazed People.

But I think I have already drawn the *Effigies* of so perfect an *Antichristian Pride*, that nothing need be added thereto, nor the least scruple left, but that he that exalts himself thus high cannot but be *that Man of sin, which sits in the House of God, and exalts himself above all that is called God.* ^{2 Thess. 2.}

CHAP. XI.

1. *That the Pride of this Superlative Head will diffuse it self also into its Members.* 2. *Further general Incentives to this Vice in this usurping Priesthood.* 3. *Peculiar Incentives thereto in some great Dignities.* 4. *The singularity of Habits, and way of living in some Religious Orders, an occasion of Pride.* 5. *The pretence of meriting in these Orders an high and hateful Instance of this Vice.* 6. *That such an elated Pseudo-Clergie as this might well go for that Man of sin that exalts himself above every thing that is worshipped;* 7. *And be emblemized in the description of the Leviathan, who is called the King of the children of Pride.*

1. **N**Or can we imagine the Head so diabolically proud, but this poison must diffuse it self into all the Body, and swell up all the Members thereof in some sort or other. For though this High-priest have a great power over his Clergie themselves, to tax them and fleece them;

yet they would all of them be not a little puffed up to conceit themselves parts of that Body whose Head is so transcendently raised above all the Princes of the Earth, over whom he having once usurped the Tyranny, and being warm and well settled in his power, he may haply be the more easie and beneficial to his own Tribe. Besides, *their being exempted from all Secular Powers* must needs elate their minds, and make them haughty and domineering, and prone to be injurious, they being able to recoil to such Judges as will be parties for them.

2. Moreover the *power of receiving Auricular Confession* is a mighty subjugative and insulting Privilege over the poor prostrate Laity at the feet of their Confessors. And that distinctive Privilege of the *Eucharistick Cup* peculiar to the Priest must needs make the Lay-men lear or lounge aloof off and look maimedly on't, as acknowledging so vast a distance betwixt them and the Priesthood. All which things tend naturally to the swelling up of this Clergie. How then can they bear that conceit of *the power of creating their Creator*, and of being such Priests as offer the very Body of Christ for a propitiation, and therefore in this regard may conceit themselves in some sense superiour to Christ himself? These are common to the whole Body Sacerdotal.

3. But there are also Considerations peculiar, though to great numbers; as those that are *Sacerdotal Princes* and great Persons in this Church have a peculiar instigation to this Vice. For it were easie to phantasy that this mighty High-priest may create *Ecclesiastick Potentates* under him, which may be Co-assessors and sharers with him in this Spiritual Domination over the World; he creating them with some such Form as this, *Estote Fratres mei, & Principes mundi*: which must needs set their spirits at an high pitch.

But many Ranks inferiour to these, and yet equal to Secular Princes and Nobles, such as may have the pomp or accommodation of * *ἵππων καὶ ῥεδῶν καὶ σιμῶτων*, that is to say, of *Horses and Coaches*, and *Lackeys* or Pages to attend them or run by them, may make up a numerous company of these children of Pride: who yet bearing the Titles of *Pastours* and *Over-seers* of the Flock of Christ, *oversee* them in no other sense then of *over-looking* them, they being placed so high above them, that they have not any mind or ability to feed them, but rather to flay them and Lord it over them.

4. And lastly, for those that are yet more numerous, which we may suppose to have put on the vizard of a more peculiar Holiness, listing themselves under the Title and Conduct of this or that Saint, and making a show of *Humility* by wearing some uncouth and sordid Habit, and seeming separate from the World by retiring into lazie and populous Monasteries, and mortified to the pride and glory of it, while they seek the praise and admiration of men by setting a badge of special Sanctity on themselves by their peculiar Habiliments and extravagant method of living; I confess it were a miracle to me, if this *self-chosen Sanctity* of theirs, consisting in *meats and drinks and abstaining from marriage*, and the like, did not so puff them up in their carnal conceits, that they may deservedly be look'd upon as the most genuine Subjects of this *King of Pride*.

5. Besides

5. Besides that the very pretence to this *By-course of Life* may be very impudently turgent to the modest sense of any sober and truly-sanctified Christian, who cannot but esteem it presumptuous to stand upon their own merits, and plead their right to Heaven upon what they could any way doe here on Earth for so inestimable and ineffable a Reward. What an high *Luciferian* Rant then were it in these Spiritual undertakers to pretend that they can doe not onely their own task, but the tasks of others also?

In which pretence there is comprised two of the most hatefull *Specimens* of *Pride* that can be excogitated: namely, the vilifying of the all-sufficient Merits of Christ, as if they were defectuous, and not able to supply the wants of all men to whom God would be propitious, but they must be eeked and patched out by the Supplements of such self-weening wretches; and then an over-estimation and ridiculously-heightned conceit they have of their own Power, Strength and Sanctimony, that they can doe more, and that by way of Merit, then will serve their own turns, or then God requires at their hands. Whenas we are expressly taught by the Holy Scripture to say, That *when we have done all we can, we are unprofitable servants*; and, that *Salvation is by Faith, not by Works, that no man may boast*. Luke 17. 10.
Eph. 2. 9.

6. Wherefore we will look upon this High-Priest and Universal Head of this Pseudo-christian Clergie, together with all the several Religious Ranks and Orders under it, and by devout acknowledgement fodered and cemented to it and influenced by it, all plumped up with one common spirit of *Pride* and sense of Ruling and Domineering over the persons and consciences of the Laity, and highly conceited of themselves by reason of these carnal and *external shews of Sanctity* and Supereminency above the rest of the world, which consists onely in *Anointings, in Habits, in Abstinence from meat*, and the like, which are poor and beggerly Elements, but yet bloating and swelling with a secret poison those that relish them and esteem them and are interessed in the observation of them; I say, we will look upon all these from the highest to the lowest as one Body of one Head, and altogether as *one Man of sin*, who having one spirit and mind against the Law of God and Christ, do exalt themselves against and above both; though some in one manner, others in another. But they having one mind and will and joint consent, are all accessory to all, and are such a Draught and Representation of Antichristian Pride, as nothing can be more, or more absolute. This is he that ** beholdeth * Job 41. 34* all high things, and is the King of the children of Pride; the highest and most notorious example of a proud and elated Polity as ever yet appeared in the World.

7. And I think the Text it self may not be misapplied, there being that great affinity betwixt Antichrist and the Devil. And it may be greater betwixt him and some expressions of the Text describing the *Leviathan*, then betwixt the said expressions and his corival, for the honour of being typified therein. ** His Scales are his Pride shut up together as with a close * Verse 15, seal. One is so near another that no aire can come betwixt them. They are 16, 17. joyned one to another, they stick together that they cannot be sundred.*

Which we will suppose to be the very boast of this Pseudo-Christian Polity; That they are, as it were, all of one piece, firmly joyned each part to another, though not by any tie of Ingenuity and Love, but riveted and nailed together by the iron hand of Necessity and Tyrannicall Force; Fear of extremity, Joynt-Interest, and Oaths of absolute Obedience to an Infallible Power, holding them as close together as these brazen shields or sealed scales of the *Leviathan*.

- And now if we consider the Head of this monster, His *Eyes* are said to be * *like the Eye-lids of the morning*, that is, very lofty and supercilious, splendid and glorious, as we have already described the Pomp of this Superlative Head to be. But * *out of his mouth goe burning Lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. Out of his nostrills goeth smoak, as out of a seething pot or caldron. His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.* That is to say, He sets all the world on Fire in his Pride and Wrath, by his wicked Incendiaries and Emissaries, that run like lightning at his command into all quarters of the Empire: Or in a pretended Religious Rage against the opposers of his Sovereign Holiness he thunders out Excommunications against Princes, and so kindles war and discord, and involves all in flames and blood. And lastly, to set out the obstinate Immutableness of this Polity in their *Dogmatisms* and their remorseless Martyring and torturing them that submit not to them, it is said, that * *his heart is as firm as stone, and as hard as the neather mil-stone.* But as it is said of Pharaoh King of Egypt in the Psalms, Psalm 74. 14. *Thou brakest the Heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to thy people in the wilderness*, namely, to the Israelites, to whom all things fell out in Types and Figures: So * *Esay* has foretold that the time will come when *the Earth shall disclose her bloud, and shall no more cover her slain. In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong Sword* (even with that sharp Sword that goeth out of his Mouth) *shall punish Leviathan the piercing Serpent, even Leviathan that crooked Serpent,* (and shall meet him in all his fraudulent windings and obliquities) *and shall slay the Dragon that is in the Sea,* that is to say, that dwells betwixt the two Seas, as *Grotius* interprets the watry *Leviathan*, in the Psalms, of Pharaoh King of Egypt, because his Dominion was extended betwixt two Seas. *In that day sing ye unto her, A Vineyard of red wine; I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. He will cause them of Jacob to take root, Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit.* But this was an Excursion more then I intended.
- * Verse 18.
- * Verse 19, 20, 21.
- * Verse 24.
- Psalm 74. 14.
- * Chap. 26. 21.
- & Chap. 27. 1.
- Verse 2, 3.
- Verse 6.

CHAP. XII.

1. *An Antichristian Frame opposite to the Divine Grace of Purity described in general.* 2. *That the Numerousness of Festivals join'd with a dead and Spiritless exercise of Worship leads to Impurity:* 3. *As also the Vow of Calibate in unmortified Monks and Priests.* 4. *The opportunities of their Order and Function.* 5. *The opinion of Fornication being no sin, and Adultery a less one than the breach of the Vow of Single life.* 6. *Easy Rates for Pardons and Indulgences in these Vices.* 7. *Slight Penances.* 8. *The dedicating a considerable part of the year to wild extravagancies under Masks and Vizards.* 9, 10. *Concubines allowed to Priests.* 11. *The pompous Equipage of Courtesans, and the Supreme Pastour's receiving Tribute from their trading.* 12. *The example of this High-priest and his Clergie.* 13. *The riseness of Sodomie near his Palace:* 14. *And its spreading thence into the remotest parts of his Dominion.* 15. *That an Ecclesiastick Polity in this condition were the Mystical City of Sodom; and characterized in those Apocalyptick Catalogues under the titles of Πόρνοι, Ἐβδελυγμοί, and Κίβες.*

1. **W**E return to the pursuit of the matter in hand, and pass on to the next *Antichristian* Opposition; and that is against the Second Branch of the *Divine Life*, which is *Purity*. Where omitting to speak of *Hypocrisie*, which is one kind of *Impurity*, and which cannot scape being very frequent in such a Religion as I have hitherto described, that consists so much in outward shows and superficial Formalities; we will direct our pencil to the drawing of such an Image of *Impurity* as is more gross and fulsome, the chief parts whereof are *Fornication*, *Adultery* and *Sodomie*. I say therefore, that if the very Frame and Complexion of Ecclesiastick Polity or Doctrine were such as did naturally either necessitate or encourage such Uncleanneesses as these, were not this a palpable Antichristian opposing of that *Christian Purity* unto which we are all called?

2. And such a Frame I conceive were this that I now shall delineate, beginning with smaller things first. We will suppose therefore a *great number of Holy-days*, wherein men shall be restrained from working in their honest vocations; and that the exercise of their Religion on those days, as it takes up no considerable time, (unless it be in some ludicrous pomps) so to be of that nature that it does not search the Hearts of men at all, nor ingraft the Fear of God in them, nor really mortify them from the lusts of the Flesh, they being onely spectators of dumb shows, as it were, and hearers of a publick Service they understand not one syllable of; and when this is done, think they have done enough, and, it may be, do not that neither, nor any Secular work upon pain of the high displeasure of the Church, but may be more securely found in a Tavern, Ale-house or Baudy-house, then working on their Trades.

Wherefore I demand, concerning men of unmortified minds, who have no opportunity of being fore-armed against the assaults of the Flesh by a searching and intelligible Service of God in publick, or a Soul-convincing Ministry, but necessitated to be idle; what these men can fall more naturally into then tipping and drinking and excess, which joyned with this imposed Idleness must needs carry them to such acts of Filthinesse as opportunity will offer them. It is a known Aphorism, That Idleness is the Mother of Naughtiness.

*Hæc ut ames faciunt, hæc quæ fecere tuentur,
Hæc sunt jucundi causa cibique mali.*

And therefore the numerosity of Festivals, joyn'd with a dead and spiritless Form of Religious Worship, where the Assistants are but as it were the Spectatours of a dumb show, as I said before, what can this be but the School of Leudness and the Nurse of Impurity?

3. Again, Suppose an Order of men, and that Numerous, that feed and fare deliciously, eat and drink of the best, ever Idle, and living onely of other mens labours, that are neither in pursuit of more subtile and bewitching Studies of Philosophy and noble Theory, to carry away the redundance of their Strength and to exhaust their Spirits, nor any searching and consuming pangs of Devotion; but onely patter over their Offices and set Prayers as an external duty, in which, if they be understood, there may be little that will so affect the Mind as to maim the Body at all; suppose, I say, these men, notwithstanding their ability and fitness for the functions of Virility, should by an irrevocable Vow (taken rashly and indiscreetly, contrary not onely to the Law of God, but to that of their own Nature and Complexion) be condemned to perpetual *Celibate*: what can be the natural event thereof but frequent *Fornications*, or *Adulteries*, or foul Acts of *Sodomie*? Wherefore *Monks*, or *Priests*, or be they what they will that are tied to this Law in these circumstances, cannot fail (unless by a Miracle) to attempt at least the transgressing, if they do not frequently *de facto* transgress, the Laws of God or Nature, and fill the Christian world with the unfavoury reek and fume of their Filthinesses. And it is likely they might find their game the more easily amongst the female Votaries, if they were supposed also without consulting their own Tempers to have offered themselves, or else by the circumventions and importunities of others to have been contrived into Monasteries.

4. But imagine these were more recluse, yet the World is wide enough; and if that be true that is so commonly said, *Casta est quam nemo rogavit*, they being so well furnished, and having so little to doe but to study such artifices, it will not be hard for them to compass their prize. Nay they need not study opportunities, they being offered to them in some parts of their Religious Function, as in the privacy of *Auricular Confession*. So strong would Temptation be, though the power of Conscience and the fear of Punishment were yet entire.

5. But suppose some of the Learned should pronounce *simple Fornication* no sin, as well as *Adultery* a less one then the breach of the Vow of *Celibate*;

Calibate; how chearfully would these well-appointed Monasticks goe about their work then? and how much more easily would all unmarried both Males and Females be tempted to the satisfying of their lusts in this single kind of Leudness?

6. But if this will not be so fully apprehended or firmly believed, we will suppose still more Cordials behind, and higher Provocatives to Lust: Such large *Indulgences*, such easy Rates for *Dispensations* and Absolutions, from that unholy High-priest we have so often mentioned, not onely for simple *Fornication* and *Adultery*, but for *Rapes* upon Virgins, for the grossest *Incest*, for lying with ones Neece, nay with his Sister or own Mother; that no man could be much dismay'd at the foulest acts of Filthiness, when he has once considered at what a small value that infallible Judge of Controversies has rated them; nor abstain from indulging to himself any pleasing lust, being so much countenanced and so well encouraged by this indulgent Father Oecumenical or Catholick *Mitie* of the Church.

7. *Slight Penances* also would be another great Animation to this Sin of *Uncleannefs*. As if so be some small Alms, or a few Prayers repeated so many times over, or going round the Stairs of a Market-Cross, or a little Fasting, or the like, would be a compensation for such foul miscarriages in a Lay-man, and some two or three months exclusion from the Church for a Priest, though taken in the Act of Adultery.

8. But we may imagine yet further artifices of debauching the world without bidding them in expresse terms to be naught. As if, for example, a considerable part of the year, suppose a twelfth or sixth part, were solemnly set apart for one continual Festival of wild Frolicks and Revelings, it being permitted for so long time together under masks and vizards to commit any villanies or outrages that the lasciviency of their own lawless phancy shall suggest; as if, because their faces are hid from men, their persons and actions were also concealed from God: Were not this a mere method of fleshing men in leudness and wickedness, and of instilling into them that vile Principle, *That Vertue and Vice are but empty Names, and that any thing may be done by the permission or connivence of Authority*? Nay to suggest in too significant an Hieroglyphick, *That there is no God, and That sin would be nothing but for the shame of men*?

9. This also would be no small countenance to *Whoredom*, to set an example of that liberty in those who should be more exquisite patterns of Chastity and Continence and Mortification of the Flesh; I mean the *Priests*, who are the most immediate Guides of the people. If therefore in process of time the corruption of this Church came to that height, that these Holy anointed men of God might, by the allowance of the Laws of their High-priest, have their *Concubines* to solace themselves with, which, not being *Wives*, come as near to the condition of *Hartors* as four penies to a groat; would not this be a great stumbling-block in the eyes of the People, both Males and Females, to cause them to sin, they seeing him that is their immediate Guide to Heaven so boldly to take along with him an *allumed Whore* for his intimate companion? For Christian Religion admits of no such thing as a *Concubine*. Every one is to be the

the Husband of one Wife, but not any the Husband of a Concubine ; that sounds against common sense.

10. Wherefore every young man in the Parish having so Authentick an example of *Fornication* in his ghostly Guide, who is so Sacred a Person that he is not to be touched by any Officer of the Civil Magistrate, who is so Holy as to be deemed a fit Intercessour in the behalf of the people above at the high Altar in the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the people in the mean time being left behind in the body of the Church, as the *Israelites* at the foot of the Hill when *Moses* went up to speak with God in private on the top of Mount *Sinai* ; whose *Lips* are so sanctified that they onely (and not the prophane *Beards* of the Lay-men) may kiss the *Holy Cup*, nay drink all off, and then wipe the *Chalice* clean when he hath done, left any drop should be left to quench the thirst of any longing Lay-man or Lay-woman's curiosity ; and lastly, whose *Breath* is so omnipotent, as by the recital of *Five words* to create the Maker and Creatour of all mankind ; if so holy and magnificent a person as this, will every youth of the Parish say, (with the young blade in the Comedy) may play such loose pranks with one that is not his Wife ; *Ego homuncio hoc non faciam ? ego vero illud faciam, ac lubens*. Thus naturally will they be invited and encouraged by this important example of the Priest, to commit folly in every Village, Town and City in a Kingdom. And so great a scandal will this false Church not stick to give, rather then put herself in a less capacity or probability of being Heir or Executress upon the death of her Priests.

11. And for this High-priest himself, he might contribute not a little to this debauchery of Christendom, if under his own nose, I mean in his own See, or Metropolis of the Empire, he should be too favourable and remiss in punishing and repressing the boldness of this Vice ; as, if he should suffer known Currefians to pass the streets with a magnificency of Equipage equal to the greatest Ladies, courted, and accompanied even at Noon-time of the day (*spectante populo*) with Clergie-men of the highest Rank and Degree, without the correcting so gross an enormity : This certainly were a competent advantage and furtherance towards the bringing the game into Credit.

But suppose also his Sanctity should vouchsafe to accept of part of the Gains of these *Nuns of Venus*, to encrease his Revenues thereby ; would not that be a further confirmation of the Lawfulness of that sport, and a publick signification to the world, that men need not trouble themselves so much to hold out the siege against the importunity of the Lusts of the Flesh, since his Sanctitie's own self has come to fair terms in that point, and will patiently suffer these workers of Impurity to set up shop in numerous companies even in his own Episcopal See, provided they pay but their annuall Tribute, and thereby acknowledge his Sacred High-priestship the Supreme *Sannio* of the City ? This were indeed to be a *Persecutour of Marriage*, and a *Patron of Brothells*, as one speaks well in this case.

For what greater Patronage can they desire then his suffrage and allowance that is or would be held the *Universal Infalible Fudge* in Religious

Religious Causes at least, and whose very Title or Inscription is *Holiness*? And that he does allow them, it is plain, in that he accepts, if not extorts, part of their Gains from them. Whenas the true Holy one of *Israel* would not accept of the * *Hire of a Whore*, though it were a free-will offering; because he would shew his aversion from all such uncleannesses. But it is impossible any man can be knowingly and wittingly or *ex pacto* sharer in the Gains, upon condition of silence or connivence or abetting any way the wickedness that brings in the gain, but he must be *ipso facto* a sharer in the wickedness it self. Which being supposed in this High-priest, it is consequent thereto that he looks upon this Nundination of *Venus*, I mean the trade of Baudefy, not to be wicked, and thereby lets the whole world loose to Debauchery and Leudness.

* *Deut. 23. 18.*

12. Which they would be still the more hastily preeipitated and sunk into, if they were surrounded with a multitude of Votes from the inferior Religious Orders, their impudent actions and unfavoury speeches giving witness generally for the trivialness of this sin, if any at all. For we suppose they make it a sin scarce in any thing but this; That they must confess it to the Priest, (that the Priesthood may have the better hank over the Laity, and feel their own mis-practices lie more easy upon their minds, by finding others like themselves) must acknowledge his Authority, and stand to his courtesy, in a business wherein I have already described him very civil and humane.

We will therefore suppose the generality of the Clergie of this false Church foul and impure in actions, words and behaviour; and, that nothing may be wanting to the heightning of this *Idea of Antichristianism* in this point we are upon, (and you may, if you will, suppose the same in others) the High-priest himself as ill, if not worse then any of the rest, for Whoredoms, Adulteries and Incests. Which things certainly must have a wicked influence for the debauching all that part of Christendom that can have any respect for, or owe any homage to, this Sacerdotal Sovereignty.

13. Finally, that there may be nothing wanting to fill up the measure of this Antichristian Pollution or Impurity we do describe, we will further suppose those Regions and Principalities that border nearest to the See of this Supreme Priest to be a second *Pentapolis* for the most hainous of all Uncleannesses, I mean *Sodomie* it self.

Nay that the High-priests themselves shall be ordinarily so unholy, that they shall be accounted tolerable, if not praise-worthy, provided they content themselves with what ever illicit pleasures they can enjoy from Women, Masculine Venerie being so frequent even in the Heads of this Apostatized Church; and That to be *Pathicks* were the next step to the highest Ecclesiastical Preferments, or at least no stop at all thereto; That this foul sin of *Gomorrhah* is grown so much in request, that Ecclesiastick Princes pride themselves in shewing their wit and eloquence in setting forth the pleasures of that Vice, and precellency of it above any enjoyments from the Female sex, and publish such beastly discourses with security and impunity from the Head of this unholy and unwholesome Synagogue; who notwithstanding would thunder against the breach of

of a *Monastick Vow*, or any Doctrine tending thereto, with fire and lightning; and it may be suppress any honest Satyr made to disparage the hainousness of that fulsom crime of *Sodomie*, nay dispense with whole Families upon small pretences in so execrable a trade of Wickedness.

14. And lastly, That partly by the emboldening examples of this high Præsul's Court, and partly by the strong temptations and importunities of a *Monastick* life, (Idleness and ineffectual forms of Devotion leaving the Body utterly unmortified, nay more foul and lustful then in ordinary Secular men; and their secluseness from women permitting them no other way to discharge their filthy burthens then by abusing themselves with Mankind) we will further suppose that this noisom poison has spread it self generally in this false Christendom, and that sundry *Monasteries* would abound with this sin of *Gomorrhah*, this impure heat piercing from that mouth of Hell, the High-priest's Palace, to the more cold and Northern climes of his Antichristian Dominion.

15. Wherefore the very frame and constitution of this Pseudo-christian Polity being such, as of its own nature is prone to bring forth so foul and poisonous fruits as these, even the fruits of *Sodom* and the apples of *Gomorrhah*; and we supposing that it does actually bring forth such fruits, even the uncleanest works of the Flesh, *Fornication*, *Adultery*, *Incest*, and *Sodomy* it self in so plentiful a manner: how can we doubt but that this is a considerable Limb of *Antichristianism*, or of *Antichrist* himself, where they are found, I mean this gross impurity so conspicuously opposite to the second Branch of the *Divine Life*; and that this Polity thus infected (if that may be said to be *infection* which is but the natural flower or fruit of the intrinsecal constitution of a thing) with these several kinds of Uncleaness, is that very City, *Antichristian* in the highest measure, which is mystically called *Sodom* as well as *Egypt*, and whose inhabitants are excluded out of the Holy City (the New *Jerusalem*) as perfectly opposite thereto, and whose portion is *the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second Death*?

Rev. 11.

* Rev. 21.

In which black list of the damned there are reckoned up amongst others * οἱ πόρνοι, *Whores and Whore-mongers*, be it simple *Fornication*, *Adultery*, or *Incest*; as also οἱ ἐβδελυγμένοι, which *Grotius* interprets ἀσπρενοκοῖται, and μολαχοὶ, *abusers of themselves with Mankind*, and *Pathicks*; to which answers οἱ κύνες, *Dogs*, in the other Catalogue chap. 22. The fury of the lustfulness and obscenity of *Dogs* making them promiscuously attempt one another without discrimination of Sex.

And this may serve briefly for a Description of that Limb of *Antichristianism* that opposes that Branch of the *Divine Life* which is *Christian Purity*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

1. *The excellency of Charity, and that it is the very Life and Soul of the Polity of Christ.*
2. *A Description of the nature of Christ's Kingdom, out of Scripture.*
3. *A Collection of the Properties of his Government, out of the fore-cited Predictions; and that they are all the Effects of Charity.*
4. *To which the Kingdom of Antichrist is opposite.*
5. *The oppression of the poor and needy by this Antichristian Polity.*
6. *The defrauding men of their Estates, upon a false pretence of Heresie.*
7. *The imposition of barbarous Penances.*
8. *Their unparallel'd Pride.*
9. *Their raising of vile Calumnies against the professors of the Truth, as the Pagans did against the Primitive Christians.*
10. *Several Instances of these Antichristian Calumnies.*

I. **T**HE last Branch of the Divine Life is Charity; which is the Summity, the Top-branch, the Flower, nay the very Quintessence of Christianity, and the Life and Soul of that amiable and comfortable Polity and Kingdom of Christ which was predicted in the Holy Scriptures, and should most immediately be seated in Ecclesiastick persons; the Gravity, Meekness and Exemplarity of whose Conversations, and the influence of their powerful Doctrine and comfortable and equitable Discipline, reaching to a more exquisite emendation of mens manners then the Civil Laws do ordinarily aim at, (that is to say, to the making men more sober and more pure in their converse, more fair and tolerable in their exactions, more liberal and compassionate toward the poor, more faithful and sincere, more favourable and candid one to another then Political Laws can effect) should erect that *Kingdom of Christ* upon Earth which would really prove the great Joy and Happiness of all the Nations of the World, according to their desire and expectation. For there is indeed nothing more desirable then *Christ's Kingdom*, which we pray every day that it may come, according to those descriptions thereof in the Prophets and Psalms.

2. *He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. He shall come down like the rain upon the mowen grass, as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the Moon endureth.* And a little after in the same Psalm, *He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy: He shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight.* And in * *Esay* it is said of him, *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he hath brought judgment into victory.* And again in the * *Psalms*, *In thy majesty ride on prosperously because of truth, meekness and righteousness: and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things,* namely, to break in pieces the Oppressour, and to put the Fraudulent to open shame. Also in * *Zacharie*, *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the foal of an Ass.*

Psal. 72.

* Chap. 42.

* Psal. 45.

* Chap. 9.

P

And

* Chap. 40.

And again in * *Esay*, He shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd, he shall gather the Lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. And in another place more copiously describing the Kingdom of Christ, * *With righteousness*, saith he, shall I judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth, and shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The Wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf and the young Lion and the Fatling together, and a little Child shall lead them; and the Cow and the Bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the Lion shall eat straw like an Ox. And a sucking Child shall play on the hole of the Asp, and the weaned Child shall put his hand on a Cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountains. For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

* Chap. 11.

To all which you may adde, That Christ with his Church in the *Revelation* is all along represented under the Hieroglyphick of a *Lamb*, harmless and peaceable creature; and in *Daniel* under the Type of a *Lamb*, whereas the rest of the Kingdoms are typified by wild Beasts. Which intimates that the Kingdom of Christ is not a Kingdom of *Belluine Ferocity* but of *Reason, Humanity, and tender Loving-kindness*.

3. According therefore to this Description of the Kingdom of Christ it is plainly a *Kingdom of Peace and Love*, the *Empire of that Divine truth of Charity*, and discovers it self in the defending, righting and relieving of the poor; in the lowliness and meekness of the Governours; and in the truth and faithfulness of them, in managing their affairs without guile or deceit; in the unity and friendly conversableness of people; in the cessation of war and hostility; and in the protection of the Saints of God from persecution and slaughter. All these *Happineffes* are included in the *Reign of Christ* according to the above-cited predictions; and are the Effects of *Charity*, as *S. Paul* has described that *Grace* from whence flow all the excellent fruits thereof.

1 Cor. 13.

For *Charity is kind*, full of acts of Humanity; *seeketh not her own*, much less what belongs to others, either out of envy or covetousness. *Charity is not puffed up* with pride and high-mindedness: *has no pleasure in unrighteousness* or deceitfulness, but *rejoiceth in truth* and faithfulness. *Charity does not easily think evil of men*, or unseemly behave herself out of the bad opinion she conceives of them in matters of Morality or Religion. *Charity is so far from exciting others to war*, that she is not provoked to anger, but is patient and long-suffering; so far from cutting and murdering the good, that she will not be over-severe to those that are no better than they should be. For *Charity beareth all things*, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; so far from persecuting, imprisoning, from racking and killing of innocent good men (that are endued with the true fear of God) upon worldly jealousies and Suspicions, that is to say, for fear the spreading of the *True* Gospel should bear down their usurped Empire of *Idolatrous Temples and Superstition*.

4. 1

4. Having therefore so clear a view of the nature and properties of *Charity*, and of the condition of the *Reign of Christ* in his Church, whose Dominion is founded in the Law of Love; it will not be hard to draw the picture of an *Antichristian Polity* so far forth as it is opposite to this last Branch of the *Divine Life*, which is that transcendent Grace of *Charity*.

Let us suppose therefore a company of men that pretend to succeed Christ and his Apostles (who if they be his legitimate Successors, they should succeed him also in the Graces of his Spirit) to be quite contrary, in the administration of the affairs of the Church, to that Description of the *Kingdom of Christ* out of the Prophets and Psalms; would not this of a truth prove a most palpable and remarkable Limb of *Antichristianism*?

5. As suppose first, for example, Whereas our Saviour Christ is described as one that *does redeem the souls of the poor and needy from oppression and wrong*; if the Frame of this Polity that his pretended Successors set up in the World were a yoke upon the most simple-meaning people greater then that of *Judaism*, and a servitude and bondage more intolerable then that of *Egypt*, as I have above described it, as both burthening and afflicting their Consciences, and also wearying their Bodies, and emptying their Purses by mulcts for such offences as are neither against the Law of God nor any duty we any way owe to our Neighbour, but onely against such Superstitious Institutes as were made by the Ignorance of some and the cunning Craft of others, who multiply unnecessary Laws, that they may enjoy the sweet of the Penalties, and suck away the bloud and sustenance of the poor labouring-man, as often as they catch him in these nets: were not this point-blank contrary to that part of the Description of *Christ's Kingdom* that consists in the *protecting and easing of the poor and oppressed*?

Book I. ch. 19,
20, 21, 22.

6. It were a very unchristian thing, and a shreud sign that those were not the true and genuine Successors of Christ, that did not prevail so much upon the Civil Government, that vassalage and slavery and squalid and deplorable poverty should be chased away, for the glory of the Gospel, and the honour of the Kingdom of Christ, which is supposed to be where-ever the Gospel is received: But for these pretended hypocritical Successors to be Instruments and Assistants to the enslaving of the World, for the partaking of the spoil, or rather to erect a Spiritual Polity to enslave all, and bring the most insupportable Servitude of Body, Soul and Estate, such as Paganism could scarce ever shew the like, certainly this must be very highly *Antichristian*.

For indeed what can be more salvagely oppressive in reference to the very Estates of men, then to frame such a Religion, upon the pretence of their *Infallibility*, as is perfectly repugnant to the plain Word of God and immutable Rules of Reason; depraving of things so for their own worldly advantage, as I have already abundantly set out, to bring in a more ample Revenue to feed the Pride and Luxury of this false Church? And then when they have thus grossly perverted the Truth of God, to declare that they who will not say Amen to their lies and forgeries, have no more right to their own Estates then a Thief or Robber to what he has got by unlawful spoil: and therefore accordingly not onely to hinder them from

any employments of either profit or credit, but disable them from making of Wills, and their Heirs from inheriting their Estates, and awing from laying claim to their Patrimonies, lest their Father's Heresie tailed upon them whether they will or no.

7. To which Antichristian Barbarities you may adde also the *severe and cruel Penances* they put upon them that do submit themselves to the Church; making them go in proceffion in contemptible disguises, and enioyning them to march in their shirts, bare foot and bare leg, and whip their own bodies in the sight of the people as they go along. unlike, nay how utterly contrary, is this to that Meekness and Sweetness that is described in the Discipline and Government of the Kingdom of Christ? But we need not insist upon these things, we having treated sufficiently of them already.

8. Now upon the second particular, viz. that *Humility and Lowliness* which is also one fruit of *Charity*, and by which the Person and Rule of our Saviour is described in the ancient Prophecies: We have shewed the Antichristian Detestableness of the opposite to this Vertue already in the first Branch of the *Divine Life*, and need adde nothing more thereto.

9. The third character of *Charity* is, *her delighting in true and faithful dealing amongst men*. The opposites to which are easily discovered. To say nothing therefore of the manifold *Frauds* which we have already taken notice of all along in this our Description of *Antichristianism*, certainly must be very Antichristian and uncharitable, namely, To represent mens Actions and Opinions in publick Speeches or Writings, nay to invent notorious lies and fictions to the disparagement of mens Persons and Doctrines, and suborn men to write them, and divulge them to the world for truths. Which is to doe so as was the custom of those who were under the Dragon, that old Serpent and false accuser of the primitive Christians, whom they aspersed and calumniated as *worshippers of the Sun*, because they put up their prayers with their faces towards the East; as *Man-sacrificers*, and as *Eaters and Drinkers of human flesh and blood*, because of their calling the Eucharistick Bread and Wine the Body and Blood of Christ, they understanding it onely in a mystical and symbolical sense. For professing with S. Paul, *There is neither Male nor Female in Christ*, but that both have equal admission into his Kingdom, That *they had no regard of Sexes*, but were vile Sodomites and abusers of themselves with Mankind. For meeting together to serve God in private in Grotts and Caves of the Earth for fear of persecution, they were *Conspirators against the Roman State and Empire*. And for their reverently receiving the Elements of Bread and Wine at the holy Communions, That they were *Worshippers of Ceres and Bacchus*.

10. In like manner we may imagine that this Pseudo-christian Church may raise such perverse Calumnies against the true members of Christ, namely traducing them for *Atheists*, or at least *Arrians*, because they do not acknowledge the *Divinity of a consecrated piece of Bread*; representing them as *Manichees*, because they do not hold the power of the Church to be superiour to that of Emperours and Kings, (to make thereby by the Secular Sovereignty in the Church) but affirm the Secular Power independent of the Church.

thereon; as if the holding these two distinct Powers were, forsooth, the holding the two Principles of the *Manichees*; defaming them for *Beesom-riders* or *Witches*, because they have by reason of hard persecution been driven to inhabit desert and mountainous places; or upon their meeting more privately in houses by night, to impute to them some such horrid and villainous practices as were reported of the primitive Christians, that the Candle being put out they committed Incest and all manner of Uncleanness in the dark, nay that they killed their own children in these concealed Assemblies of theirs. To accuse them of *reviling the Saints*, merely upon their professing it unlawful to invoke them; or of *blaspheming the Blessed Virgin*, because they hold it unfit to worship her. To tax them of *disobedience to the Magistrate*, onely because of their persisting in the sincere profession of that Faith that is consonant to the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles. And, lastly, to father upon them what abominable actions they please, and, speaking without a Metaphor, to gag the mouths of the thus accused and slandered, that they may not answer for themselves to clear themselves in the audience of the people: Nay to rack men till their very bowels break out of their belly, to force them to acknowledge themselves or their party guilty of such villainous crimes as it is incredible their very persecutors should in good earnest suspect them of, merely to get a pretence from such an extorted Confession to verifie their wicked Slanders to the world, and to make the harmless and innocent professors of the Truth of the Gospel to be odious and hateful in the eyes of all men.

Certainly, if this be not diametrically opposite to that part of *Charity* that discovers it self in *true and faithful dealing*, nothing can be excogitated that is so.

CHAP. XIV.

1. *The nick-naming of the true Christians by the odious Title of Hereticks, with their barbarous injuries thereupon.* 2. *That Heresie and Schism are sins against the truly-Catholick and Apostolick Church.* 3. *What is meant by One Catholick and Apostolick Church.* 4. *What is that baineous sin of Heresie.* 5. *What Schism.* 6. *That while men are sincere members of the Apostolick Body, they can be neither Hereticks nor Schismatics.* 7. *The Hypocritical and Schismatical Niceneß of this Antichristian Church in forbearing to joyn in any Religious Duty with any member of the truly-Apostolick Body.* 8. *Their fraudulent purpose in fostering this Schismatical Niceneß and Unsociableneß.*

1. **B**ut we will also take notice of that which will be so usually cast upon the Dissenters from this false Church, that it will be scarce accounted any reproach done to them, but rather civility or justice; and that is, the so freely nick-naming them by the style of *Hereticks* and *Schismatics*.

maticks. Which yet in their own judgment I suppose not to bear so much weight with it, whereas their real estimate is discoverable by their proceedings, they deeming an *Heretick* so odious or contemptible, that he is not worthy of the common privileges of mankind, and of that protection that the Laws of humane Society do afford men; that he shall not be the security of a Promise though confirmed by Oath, Faith not being to be kept with Hereticks. Not to mention here that they have made penalties of *Heresie* capital. Which how justly, though a man were *Heretick* in the *matters of Belief*, provided it were not out of Pride or conceitedness, but out of invincible Ignorance, I will not here discuss.

2. It will be of greater use to consider what is real *Heresie* or *Schism*, that the sincere and knowing Christian may not be reproached, nor the skilful affrighted with these Bug-bears. Those that make so great account against the hainousness of these sins, their Zeal and Rhetorick would be more usefully placed, if they would be so faithful as to give us a right notion of them; otherwise while they pretend to be so industriously desirous of Peace and Unity in the Church, they may but give greater occasion of Dissensions and Animosities. For to make more things *Heresies* and *Schisms* than are, is to create more quarrels than there need be. I acknowledge as soon as any, that *Heresie* and *Schism* are very grievous crimes, even of the deepest dye; but then it must be truly *Heretical* or *Schismatical*, not what-ever the peevishness, or interest, or prejudice of a contending party will be pleased to call so, under the pretence that they are *One Catholick Church*, from whose Doctrine (be it never so false or corrupt) for one to dissent must be *Heresie*, and to separate from their communion their practices never so Idolatrous *Schism*. No certainly, those high *Heresies* and *Schisms* are not against this or that particular Synagogue, though they never so numerous, but against that *ancient and truly Catholick Apostolick Church*; and he that sins against her *Unity*, sins against the Creed, which has taught us to say, *I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church*. Which words because they may be abused to the making of many Churches look less *Catholick* and *One* then it is, I shall offer an easie resolution of the sense of them.

3. I conceive therefore that the Object of our Belief in this Clause of the Creed are these three Propositions.

First, That the Church of God wherein eternal Salvation is to be had is but *One*; that is to say, That a man cannot be saved in any Religion but some wantonly conceit, but that there is one onely way of Salvation which is revealed to God's true Church, under which all must come before they can be saved.

Secondly, That this Church of God is now a *Catholick Church*, not Topical or National, as in the Commonwealth of the Jews, but a Church that is by right to spread over the face of the whole Earth, and is designed so to doe by Providence, as is expressed in several passages of the Prophet, *From the rising of the Sun to the going down of the same, my name shall be great amongst the Gentiles*, &c. as * *Malachie* has fore-told. And David in the second Psalm, *Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*.

Thirdly and lastly, That this *one Catholick Church* is neither to be stretched so wide as to be acknowledged there where the Apostolical Doctrine, the Faith and Practice delivered and commanded by Christ or his Apostles is opposed and contradicted, and quite contrary Doctrines and Practices brought in, nor to be made so narrow, as that such companies of men should not be allowed to be part of this *Catholick Church*, amongst whom notwithstanding the Apostolical Doctrines do obtain, and Primitive Practices of the Church set on foot by the Apostles or Christ himself are in use: That is to say, The adequate Character of this *one Catholick Church* is, that it rejects nothing of the Apostolical Doctrines and imitable Usages which were commanded by Christ or by his Apostles to the Church, nor teaches or institutes any thing that is point-blank opposite thereto, or to the Word of God to which Christ and his Apostles give testimony.

That therefore is the *true Catholick Church* in the whole, and in every particular company of it, which has for its visible Laws and Usages, whereby it self becomes also visible, the Laws and Usages of Christ and his Apostles, and nothing contradictorious thereunto.

This, I hope, will be acknowledged by all men the most easie and genuine sense of this Article of the Christian Creed that the words are capable of.

4. And hence I think a man may easily discover what that *Heresie* is that is justly to be deemed so hainous a sin, namely, That it is *A Dissent from the Catholick Church even in those things that are in it Apostolical*. For by them alone, they being entire and uncontradicted in her, does she discover her self to be that *one and onely Catholick Church of Christ*. And this would be an hainous sin indeed against that Authority she has to instruct and imbue the world with this saving truth, I say, to dissent from any part of this Apostolick Doctrine out of a spirit of contradiction and self-conceitedness, would be *Heresie* in the most loathsom circumstances that can be imagined.

And the next degree to this would be the dissenting from the Catholick Church in such things as they generally agree in, though they be not expressly any part of the Apostolick Doctrine, but in the mean time not plainly dissonant to the Word of God nor to the immutable Notions of humane Understanding.

And the third and last degree is, to dissent from the determinations of a mans own particular National Church in the like circumstances with the former.

These seem to have something an over-near affinity with what we have defined most properly & primarily to be *Heresie*. But considering that even Oecumenical Councils themselves may erre, and that Scripture in things necessary to Salvation is sufficiently plain, and the Affairs and the Genius of particular Nations exceeding different and changeable, and General Councils very hardly and slowly to be congregated; I must not be over-hasty to call a Dissent here, no not from an Oecumenical Doctrine or Usage, by so harsh a denomination as *Heretical*, there being no entrenchment made thereby upon the Apostolical Laws and Doctrines. But to

diffent from, or not to subscribe to the determinations of what Church soever that are plainly repugnant to the Doctrines Apostolical, were not onely not *Heretical*, but *Heroical*; especially if the Diffent is likely to be attended with any personal inconveniences to the Dissenter.

5. And now for *Schism*, there is much-what the same judgment to be made hereon. For it is plain that *Schism* truly so called is *A Separation from the Catholick Church*, or from any *National Church which is part thereof*, even then when she approves her self to be *Catholick*, that is to say, even then when she is *Apostolick*, or though she be *Apostolick*, and offer no *Opinions and Usages but such as are conformable to the Usages and Doctrines of Christ and his Apostles*. To separate from the Church in such circumstances as these, I confess were a great and damnable sin. But for one to separate from the Church in other things upon an invincible suspicion of the consenting to or doing this or that were sinful and displeasing to God (though those Opinions might be true, and Practices harmless in themselves) this I conceive though it make a man *materially a Schismatick*, he is not *formally so*, and he is rather to be pitied then reproached.

Rev. 18.

But if he separate from that part of the Church (if it can be still a part of the Church that does so) which imposes Opinions and Practices plainly repugnant to the Precepts of Christ and his Apostles; Separation in such a case need not be pitied, nor ought to be reproached, but highly commended and applauded. And that voice will warrant them that call such sober Separatists, *Come out of her, my people, lest you partake of her sins and of her plagues*. For the coming out here would be really the going in to the true Church, and the standing still, the abiding disjoyn'd therefrom; as one speaks very smartly and truly, *Is Ecclesia non jungitur ab Evangelio separatur*.

6. Wherefore from this true and determinate apprehension of things it is manifest how outrageously and Antichristianly uncharitable this Church would be against the true Members of Christ, in calling them *hereticks* and *Schismaticks*, and Renders and Tearers in pieces of the Unity of the Church; whenas in truth they are so far from being *Hereticks*, they are the faithful Witnesses of *Jesus*, and the onely sincere Members of the Apostolick Body, and keep to that one foundation of which Christ is the chief corner-stone, and are so far from being *Schismaticks* in their separation from such a Church as I have described, where gross Idolatry and Superstition has overflown all, that by separating they have redeemed themselves out of this *Babylonish* or *Egyptian* Captivity, and returned to that City that is at unity or one with it self, and must never vary, I mean that *one and onely true Catholick Church*, as being truly *Apostolick*. If it be true, That he is not joyned to the Church that is separate from the Gospel; I think it will be true also, that he that is sincerely joyned to the Gospel cannot be separate from the Church. And therefore this noise of tearing and rending the Church, is but a clamorous Accusation of men that feel their own usurped Power and Interest to shake, as if it would be in sunder at this resurrection of the true Apostolick Church, and Christ recovering the Power into his own hands for the raising that promised and long-expected Kingdom of Righteousness upon Earth.

7.

7. And yet, in the fourth place, though this false Church be thus perfectly Antichristian, as I have described, grossly Idolatrous, and wretchedly Superstitious, and thus shrilly clamorous and querimonious against the rending of the Unity of the Catholick Church, as she will phrase it; notwithstanding all this, we will suppose her so Hypocritically nice and scrupulous, that she will not contaminate herself with joyning in Divine Service with those of the true and Apostolick Church, though there be nothing in their Service but what is Apostolical; no not so much as joyn in the Lord's Prayer, or giving of thanks at meat, nor say Amen to the shortest Ejaculation or Doxologie that occasion should put into the mouth of those that appertain to the Apostolick Body; nor say Grace themselves, for fear these Apostolicks should joyn with them, or adde their Amen.

And yet, forsooth, this Synagogue of Deceivers is so zealous and industrious for the keeping up of the *Unity of the Catholick Church* as passes, when in the mean time they are so full of rancour and railing against these *Hereticks*, as they call them, that they will style them (and indeed any Church besides their own) the Church of the Devil; and pronounce that God is not God, if he do not damn them; and will forbid their Nurseries to so much as with a *Requiem* for their Souls when they are departed this life.

8. But this is but an Histronical swaggering in comparison. Their Devilish *Fraud* in the pursuance of this Unsociableness in any Divine duty, betwixt them whom they please to term *Hereticks* and those of their own Church, is conspicuous; viz. for fear commerce in religious matters should give them the knowledge of the Truth, who are held to this false Church by nothing but by believing of Lies: I mean not onely such as were long agoe framed for the advantage of their Church, but such misinterpretations and falsehoods as they possess their Nurseries with against those whom they call *Hereticks*; whose Doctrines they falsify, and traduce their carriage as they please, and by this interdicting converse with them, keep them in that vile opinion of them which they have infused by their base Calumnies.

Besides that, by this scrupulosity in communicating with them in any Religious duty, they ostentate the great Sanctity of their own Pharisaical Church, as I intimated before, and ingender an hatred and detestation of all that are opposite: which plots and practices in those who talk so much for Peace and Unity in the Church is a double iniquity, and the highest breach of *Charity* that comes not yet to blows. But she was certainly the *Whore* that called so remorselessly for the dividing of the Child, not the genuine Mother. And that must be an *Adulterate* Church most assuredly, that would have Christians differ wherein they profess themselves all agreed, and clove in sunder wherein they would naturally joyn together, and that is in the *Apostolical Doctrines and Practices*.

CHAP. XV.

1. *What Incendiaries to War and Plotters of abhorred Murthers the falsely-pretended Successours of Christ are.* 2. *Their Butcher Cruelty to the Sheep of Christ's Fold.* 3. *Instances of prodigious Barbarities upon them for their very faithfulness to their Saviour and Redeemer.* 4. *The numerousness of them that thus suffer, with some particular kinds of Cruelty.* 5. *More Instances of this Diabolical Barbarity.* 6. *All the Elements made Instruments of the wrath and fury of this Antichristian Power.* 7. *Most beastly and unnatural Examples of this Antichristian Salvageness.*

1. **B**UT there are yet behind more palpable discoveries of this Antichristian contrariety to that Divine Vertue of *Charity*, to that Royal Law, as I have already said, of the Kingdom of Christ, which is described from the Peace and Security of them that live under it, *There shall none destroy in God's holy Mountain.*

In the fifth place therefore, How plainly *Antichristian* would it be in them who pretend to be in a special manner the Successours of Christ, if they should prove Incendiaries to War, and busy Engineers of Destruction in Christendom, witty in Cruelty and Revenge, barbarous in Execution; merciless to the poor, hating them even for their Poverty's sake; poisoners of Princes, even by that Bread wherewith they would pretend to feed their Souls to everlasting life; and the High-priests themselves, the Heads of this Antichristian Polity, either the Contrivers or Applauders of such villainous Poisonings and Murthers.

2. But sixthly and lastly, The cruel and bloody Persecution of the true and living Members of the Kingdom of Christ, for their faithful adhering to the plain and undoubted Commands of their Heavenly Sovereign, who is styled *King of Kings* and *Lord of Lords*, this certainly must be the most signal and capital *Antichristianism* that any Polity can be corrupted with, and the most grossely and visibly opposite both to the nature of *Charity*, which *beareth all things* and *endureth all things*, which will not be over-severe to the wicked, much less cruel to the good; and also to the Description of Christ's Government, who is said to *redeem the Souls of the needy from deceit and violence*, and that *their blood is precious in his sight. He shall feed his Flock like a shepherd, he shall gather his Lambs with his arme, and carry them in his bosome.* This is the generous spirit of the true Christian Pastours, whether of high or low degree, thus tenderly affected towards their Sheep.

But such as thwack them and beat them, and violently drive them instead of leading them by an Evangelical call and going before them in the way of Christian Example, these are not *Shepherds*, but *Butchers*, and will easily drive them to the Shambles, and see their throat cut without remorse.

3. Persecution therefore of the Saints of God, even for those things which they approve themselves to be Saints in, as *in refusing to worship Images*.

Psalms 72.

Esa. 40.

or to commit any other act of Idolatry, in plainly and simply professing the truth of the Gospel, and living according thereto, conscientiously abstaining from all such things as it has declared unlawful; This is as manifest a Limb of Antichristianism as any can be exhibited to our view; and were indeed notoriously Antichristian, though it proceeded no further then to a partial loss of goods, Imprisonment, and Death without any further odious and aggravating circumstances.

“But to be stripped stark naked of all a man has to perfect beggary; not to be committed to a common Prison, but to be thrust into some lonesome and loathsome cell or Dungeon, upon moist straw or flags, stinking with dung and ordure, or else without this Tapestry, the floor of it self being soft and miry enough, that they may seem to need no pillow, and it may be so streight that they scarce have room enough to lie at their length.

And then for their manner of Death, when they are called unto it, how unjust and barbarous were it, to have their Integrity and Sincerity to their Saviour to be reckoned a crime more capital then Theft and Murder, and therefore be punished with a severer death: hanging or heading not serving the turn, but they must undergoe that death which is most torturous and dreadfull. “Fire and Faggot must be the reward of their constant and faithfull obedience to their dear Redeemer, and it may be with some extraordinary circumstances: they not dispatching them with that favour that they do Murderers of Fathers or Murderers of Husbands, or Conjurers and contractors with the Devil; but lengthening their torments by the malicious artifice of pulleys, dipping them in, and then pulling them up again out of the flames, as if they were ducking them in the Water rather then torturing them in the Fire. Not sparing the Women big with child, no nor the Child that has been baptized with fire as soon as born into the world, but being mercifully transmitted out of the burst womb through the flames, (as untouched almost as the three Children in the fiery furnace) has been cast again into that consuming Element by the cruel hands of the abhorred Hangman; setting less by the poor innocent Infant of an Heretick, then by the litter of a Birch or young Kitlings, to whom none will be so barbarous as to burn them in the Fire, but commit them rather to the mercies of that more soft and gentle Element of Water.

4. “What shall we say to the multitudes of those that are thus martyred, I mean not onely in succession, but at a clap, by thirties, fourscores, and hundreds at a time, either at one common fire-pyle, or else in barns and dwelling-houses; severe Officers with their iron weapons forcing them back as often as the heat and smoak would drive them out to seek cooler aire? What to the racking and excarnificating their bodies, before this last punishment: to the cutting out their Tongues when they are brought to the stake, that they may be in an utter incapacity of apologizing for themselves, of praising God; or edifying the people?

5. It were a long business to set before your eyes all the ways that this Antichristian Beast, this Pseudo-christian Policy and falsely-pretended

ded Hierarchy of Christ, might use in wreaking their spleen upon faithfull witnesses of *Jesus*, the living members of his true Church. What outrages they and their Officers, or Instruments and Adherers, inflamed by the poison of their zeal, may commit upon the harmless Flock of Christ; sparing none of either Sex, no not in the most compassionate circumstances; "bringing Women, and that of great quality, within three or four days after their delivery out of Child-bed, into an abhorred prison, using them with like cruel hardship they do otherwise, forcing them out of the Straw, as it is called, to tumble on a bed of faggots in a raw and noisome Gaol-cabbin; and within a while after stretching them so on the rack, and piercing them so to the bone with the strappado, they tie their legs and armes, and so shattering all their body, that they leave them more then half dead upon the torture.

"Hanging up others even while the Child is coming out of the Womb, ripping up the Bellies of others, having first nailed down their hands and feet upon some board; and having cut their Children into pieces, stopping their bleeding flesh into the mouths of their Mothers, opening the Wombs of others, and putting their Children of a year or two old into them; and so stifling them in their Mother's blood. "Hanging Men up by their privities at their own doors, and Ministers of the Town after the same manner in their Church-porches: scraping the hands, lips and crown of such Priests as are converted to the profession of the Gospel, with sharp knives or broken pieces of glass, dragging men by their legs, whom they have half killed upon the rack, like a dead dog, or such like piece of Carrion, they being unable to move themselves, and thought by the Officers unworthy to be carried.

6. It were an endless task to reckon up all the hardships that Mortality is obnoxious to. All the Elements may be made Instruments of the wrath of this Antichristian Power I describe. "Besides being burnt therefore, and pitched all over to make the nidour and smoak of the Sacrifice more acceptable to their enraged Cruelty, multitudes are be drownd'd in Rivers, men and women, even in their parturiency, being forcibly driven into the stream. Others may be benumbed or frozen to death in frosty or smoaky aire, branches of Trees being set on fire at the mouth of the Caverns where they had taken shelter: And lastly, others be buried alive in the Earth, sending out deep groans from under the ground.

"To be stript stark naked, and to be beat with rods of Iron, is an extreme hard measure; as also to have their armes and legs so pierced with the twisting of cords, as to make deep furrows in the flesh, and worms to breed in it, and consume it.

7. "What shall we say to the flinging of the young Children of Hereticks to be eaten by Hogs, and to the boiling of others alive in Caldrons? to the forcing of Children to be the executioners of their Parents, and the Parents sometimes of their own Children, Mothers being constrained to cast their own Infants into the waters? to pulling out mens eyes, and cutting off their hands, and so sending them out to grope their way in the wide world? to the flaying of

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“roasting others alive, and half killing others on purpose that they may
 “linger long in torturous pains? What to the ripping the bellies of
 “other-some, to take hold of one end of the small guts, to fasten it to a tree,
 “and then force the poor man to goe round, to wind his guts about the
 “tree, to try the length of them? What to the abusing of the bodies of
 “the dead? to the making Candles of their grease, and the selling their
 “fat to the Apothecaries? What to the laying of the bodies of men and
 “women the one upon another in an immodest posture, and to the sen-
 “ding out their boys with whips to lash off mens privities as they lie dead
 “in the field? And, lastly, what to the barbarous insulting over the heads
 “of murdered Ministers openly at the Market-Cross, disfiguring their
 “faces, flitting up their mouths, and cutting their noses; and out of a mad
 “and franctick kind of zeal boxing them about the ears, though to the
 “benumbing of their own hands, upon the dead flesh? So wild and
 salvage are they whom this *Spirit of Antichristianism* does in-
 spire.

CHAP. XVI.

1. *A new Scene of Diabolical outrages done to the innocent Flock of Christ.*
2. *That they are all to be imputed to this Antichristian Synagogue,*
though not particularly appointed by them.
3. *A description of an*
Infernal Tribunal coloured over with the specious Title of The Holy
Inquisition.
4. *The Demeanour of these Infernal Judges to the accu-*
sed.
5. *The salvage usage of the sentenced party by the grim Execution-*
ner.
6. *A new addition to the former Torture.*
7. *The Torment*
of the hollow Trough,
8. *And pan of Charcoal.*
9. *That this exem-*
plary Cruelty in these Spiritual Judges influencing all the Instruments
and Adherents to their Church makes her guilty of all the Military
outrages also.

1. **B**UT I am weary of figuring out such sad and Tragical scenes of
 things; *τὰ κατὰ ἀνάγκην*, the modes of villainie are infinite.
 There seems nothing more detestable then that cruelty of *Canniballs* that
 eat mans flesh. “But how far short would it fall thereof, if we should
 “suppose that the Instruments and Adherents to this Antichristian power
 “did riot it with the Brains of men, and set upon the table the Dugs of
 “women fried like Tripes, whom they first ravish, and then cut off their
 “breasts with some parcel of those parts which modesty will hardly
 “name?”

“What should we think of stabbing a man on the soles of his feet and
 “at his eares, cutting off his genital parts, firing the wound with the flame
 “of a Candle, for his greater torment, and for stopping the bloud?
 “What of the tearing his nails off with hot pincers, to make him re-
 “nounce his Religion, and to reconcile him to this Pseudo-Christian
 “Synagogue? What of spitting naked women through their *puddenda*,
 “and

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"and so carrying them for some space on their shoulders on long poles
 "What of stripping off the skin of a mans arme and legs in long fl
 "like leathern points, leaving him to starve in this sad condition in pris
 "What of dragging by the feet at the tail of a Mule through the Stre
 "the body beating against the Stones, and the people flinging Brick-l
 "at him as he passes by their doors? What of cramming Gun-pow
 "into the mouths and throats of men, and then setting it on fire to
 "their heads in fitters? And what lastly of this beastly and barbar
 "Cruelty, to pull the eyes of a man out, and to cut off his yard, and th
 "it into his mouth, and to expose him thus mangled unto the view of
 "people two or three days together, and in conclusion to flay him
 "live, and hang the quarters of his skin at the chief windows in
 "Town?

Could there be any thing more damnably Antichristian then
 outrages as these against the Innocent Lambs of Christ, whom this
 and Imperious Church disguises with the odious name of *Hereticks*
 concerning whom they instruct their bloody Instruments, that they
 not worthy to live, nor to die an easy death, nor to have Christian bur
 but that their naked bodies are to be exposed to the rage and hung
 greedy swine and dogs.

2. And truly, though these Cruelties, all of them which are her
 scribed, are not supposed to be appointed particularly by the Ghostly
 thers of this grand Hypocritical Synagogue: yet their Instrum
 Agents and Adherents being informed by them that all that are ne
 this Church are *Hereticks*, and that all *Hereticks* are worse then D
 and to be used worse if we have a mind to it, nay that it is meritorious
 abuse them thus, and that their tormenting them in this manner,
 killing of them with this barbarity, will free themselves from the
 and torments of Purgatory; it is plain that all this Antichristian sal
 nefess and cruelty is to be laid at the door of these Ghostly Fathers t
 selves. Which will be still more manifestly their due, if they be sup
 to have influence upon the other, not onely by their Antichristian
 Doctrine, but by the Authentickness of their Example.

3. As if, for example, we should frame some such supposition as
 That there were a Court of Judicature set up, for the enquiring
 and examining all suspected of Heresy, for the punishing them a
 dingly when they are discovered; and that some Holy persons of
 Church should be Judges in this Sacred Consistory, this *Holy Inquisi*
 but their proceedings for point of Cruelty and Injustice not inferi
 any thing we have yet named: would not this be a sign or watch-
 as it were, to all the Adherents to this Devilish Religion to use the
 mies of it as cruelly as opportunity will permit, or the natural bitterne
 their own spirits suggest?

Let us imagine therefore a Tribunal, though not so just, yet
 severe (or rather more cruel) then that of those Judges of Hell,
 and *Rhadamanthus*, and, that it may be more like theirs, to be in
 subterraneous room, (that the cries and groans of the tormented m
 pierce the ears of the people) where all things are transacted in cha

impure light and stench of Links and Torches, held by Assistants and Officers as grim of aspect as the infernal Furies; and that the proceedings of this Court are infinitely more unrighteous than those of Hell, these Holy Judges having unlimited power, any vile person being admitted for a witness against the suspected, and they making no matter whether the accusation be by word of mouth or by tickets cast in before this Sacred Consistory; for without any personal appearance or confronting one another the process is to be framed, without party, without witness, and without other Law than the pleasure of these Spiritual Judges or Infernal Spirits.

4. Now when the suspected or accused have descended into these shades of Death, we will suppose these subterraneous Judges to begin with some terrifying Premonitions and Comminations, mingling some Hypocritical Exhortations and Protestations, as if they would wash their hands clean, as *Pilate* of old, of the innocent blood they are about to spill.

But if the party will not accuse himself by the terror of these threats, that they may notwithstanding take away his life in such a torturous way as they think fit for *Hereticks*, (yea though he should freely confess that which they will call *Heresy*, yet if he will not betray all of the same opinion that he either knows or suspects) he is presently sentenced to undergoe such Agonies and Trials as these men of Cruelty shall please to adjudge him to.

5. "Wherefore there is ready at hand the grim Executioner in a black disguise so horrid as makes him look more like a Devil than a man, who seizing upon the sentenced parties, be they men or women, married or virgins, of mean rank or of noble quality, first strips them naked, to satisfy the lustfull eyes of these Holy Lechers: which to the modest Maids and grave Matrons must be a torment worse than Death it self. After this he binds their hands eight or ten times about with Cords, these cruel and lustfull Villains on the Bench commanding him to bind one round harder than another, and then with a smaller line their thumbs, and then to fasten the parties hands and thumbs to a pulley that hangs on a gibbet. After this to hang weights of Iron or Lead at their feet, at first, suppose, about five pound, and to twitch them up by the rope till their Head touches the pulley. In which pitifull posture they are called to and bawled at by these salvage Judges to confess what they would have them. And thus they hang in this exquisite torture a good space of time.

"And if the party will confess nothing, nor betray his friends, the true professours of the Gospel and faithfull Servants of *Jesus*, they let him down indeed, but to hoise him up again with a double weight of Iron at his feet; the salvage Judges commanding the hangman to let the rope goe up and down with many short checks or stops, that the weight of the Iron may rend every joynt of his body one from another. Which intolerable pain if it cause the party to shriek and cry out, (as it must needs) these grim Benchers shall drown the noise with roaring and railing at him, and calling him *Dog* and *Heretick* for so obstinately

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"(that

“(that is, so faithfully) refusing to betray himself and his friend
 “Which if he persist in, they will let him down again, and add
 “more weight to his heels, and an higher torment to his whole body
 “putting this poor member of Christ to these unsupportable torments
 “for at least two or three hours together; and, it may be, as they
 “think fit, some three days after, when his joints are most sore, bring
 “to suffer the same extremities of torment again, nay repeat it at
 “distances, if life will endure it, five or six times over.

6. And this I think were a Cruelty little inferior to any we
 hitherto intimated in all our barbarous Suppositions. But let us add
 ther Scene somewhat different; “The stripping them as before, but
 “the binding of their hands behind them, and hanging them at the p
 “together with the girding of their thighs so hard, as also their legs,
 “strong cords, and forcing the strings, by plugs of wood thrust be
 “so deep into the flesh, that they reach near the very bone: In which
 “terrible Torment they will keep them two or three hours together.

7. “Or else, which is more cruel, if it be possible, to gird both t
 “legs and armes with strong small cords, as before, so hard tha
 “sink out of sight into the flesh to the bone; but withall to lay the
 “along with his face upwards on a great hollow Trough having a cro
 “in the midst, with his back resting on that bar, to his unspeakable d
 “ment; spreading over his mouth and nostrils a fine Lawn, upon
 “they pouring out water in a small, but high-falling, stream, dri
 “Lawn into his mouth and down the furthest part of his throat:
 “can put him in no less agonie then they are that are fetching th
 “gasp. And what violence is done to him by that softer Engine,
 “the fine Linen when it is twitched out of his mouth, the blo
 “water that comes with it doth copiously witness; one would
 “brought up the very Entrails with it out of the body.

8. And lastly, to make an end, That that Element that is mo
 ellefs may not seem to be forgotten by these wicked Engin
 Cruelty, it were easy to imagine, that they may make use of great
 “coal-pans of Iron full of hot coals, forcing the Captives feet as
 “they please, and basting them with Lard, to make the pain of f
 “more exquisite. Which torture can be little less then the roasti
 alive at the fire.

9. Certainly if the Religious Orders of a Church in a form of
 and upon pretence of Piety and Zeal against *Hereticks*, can comm
 astonishing outrages and acts of Barbarism against the faithfull Fo
 of Christ; how can their example fail of being a School of u
 Cruelty for their Adherents against all such whom they shall look
Hereticks? and they are taught all are so that are not of their C
 And therefore the guilt of all these Tragical cruelties which are do
 the true Members of Christ, though not immediately by the Eccle
 themselves, but by military men, whose Instruēters and Examp
 are, is most righteously laid upon this bloody Prophet-murderin
 gogue herself, this cruel and imperious Harlot drunk with the blou
 Saints and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus; as well s

upon such Principles as I have supposed her to be of, and rage even to immense Massacres, which may exhaust thousands, yea an hundred thousand at a draught.

CHAP. XVII.

1. *That this Opposition against the Divine Grace of Charity is a most substantial Limb of Antichristianism, and the Character of them without the Holy City.* 2. *That that repeated Catalogue of abhorred Titles in the Apocalyps is plainly a Synopsis of the main Characters of the Antichristian Polity we describe.* 3. *The confirmation of the truth of our Idea of Antichristianism therefrom.* 4. *A summary Representation of this Idea in the Oppositions and Defeatments of the Privative Ends of the Gospel, as also of those noted Offices of Christ.* 5. *Of his Divinity and other holy Titles.* 6. *Of the Divine Life in Root and Branches.* 7. *A Parable to set out the salvage Injustice and Cruelty of this Antichristian Synagogue.* 8. *The Apodosis of the Parable.* 9. *That we have set out the Idea of the most real and essential Antichristianism that can be; with an Answer to what may be objected to the contrary.* 10. *That it is that very Antichristianism that is foretold in the Prophets, the clearing whereof necessitates us to an inspection into them before we make any punctual Application of our Idea to the Apostasy of the Church.*

1. **T**Hat this last Limb therefore of our Description, comprised in such things as are notoriously opposite to that Heavenly Vertue of *Charity*, is a very substantial Limb of Antichristianism, I think it is impossible for any one to doubt: And therefore it is no wonder that the chief Character thereof which is writ in letters of blood, I mean that of *Bloudy persecution*, which I last of all insisted upon, is entred into that black list of Names which are excluded out of the Holy City of God; *Without are Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Fornicatours, and Murtherers, and Idolaters, and every one that loves and makes a lie.* Which I doubt not but is a *Synopsis* of the chief Oppositions to the *Holy City*, or *Body of Christ*; and therefore what can this other Body be but the very *Body of Antichrist*? Rev. 22.

2. And I look upon that brief comprehension of those detestable Titles as the more considerable and more exactly computed, because the same summe, though not the same words; seems to be reckoned up in * two several places; for where the words differ, yet reckoning one thing with another, we shall find the same extent of sense taken in. For *Κύρις* and *πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν καὶ φιλῶν ψεῦδος* are of equal extent with *δειλοί, ἄμωσι, ἱβδελυγμένοι* and *ψευδείς*. * Revel. 21. 8. and 22. 15.

For, as I had occasion to note above, *πᾶς ὁ φιλῶν ψεῦδος* will answer to *δειλοί*, such persons being understood in both as are seducible by false Doctrines and feigned Legends contrary to both the Word of

God and common sense, and have their spirits intimidated and basely flayed and befooled with superstitious Falsehoods and Lies. And the *ὡς ὁ ποιὼν ψεύδεται* answers to *ψάδεις*, and in both are understood such as coin false doctrines for the profit of their Church, and inventing Legends, and obtrude supposititious Reliques upon the people to pick a peny out of their purses. And lastly, *ἄνθρωποι* and *ἰσχυροί* are both included in *Κύνες*, Dogs. "Ἄνθρωποι, which intimates Unbelief in Religion, is included in *Κύνες* as they are Brutes, Religion being the property of a Man. *ἰσχυροί*, or *abominable*, for masculine *nerie*, is included also in *Κύνες*, but with a particular respect to the Species, the Dog being so furiously lustfull as to spend promiscuously upon either Sex.

And now for the rest of the Titles in each Catalogue, *φάρμακοι* *φάρμακοι* are all one, saving the terminations of the words, which are not the sense at all: but *πάραι*, *φορέι*, *εἰδωλαίτεροι* exquisitely the same. And therefore the *Synopsis* is plainly the same in both places.

3. Wherefore enslaving Superstition, Infidelity or Atheism, uncleanness of either kind, Lying Legends, and Doctrines false even in Impossibility, and to the plain contradicting of Scripture, the worst Murthers, the bloody Persecution of the Saints, professed Sorcery or enchantation, or a pretence of doing more wonderfull things then the great Magicians of Egypt, and lastly, gross Idolatry and open Image-worship, all these, I say, being as well noted, and so signally, to be the opposites of the Holy City, which is the Church of Christ, as so execrable in the sight of God as expressly to be doomed or sentenced to be cast into the Lake that burns with fire and brimstone; I conceive that my *Idea of Antichristianism* being made up chiefly out of these parts, and explictly comprising them all, besides other particulars of the like nature, it cannot be denied but that it is a true and perfect *Idea* thereof even upon the testimony of Holy Writ.

4. But I dare briefly appeal to any mans Reason that has imbibed the first Rudiments of Christianity, and knows but common sense, who has read any ordinary Catechism, has the least spark of Grace in his heart, or any relish of what is holy and divine, whether the nature of the things of which I have composed this *Idea of Antichristianism* be not manifestly and intrinsically Antichristian.

For, to take again a compendious view of what we have more largely expatiated in, and thereby to give judgement more safely on the matter; what Hypothesis can be framed more Antichristian then this? That a pack of men (phantasy them as numerous as you please) should assemble together under one domineering Head, that would trample upon Priests and tread upon the necks of Emperours, and kick their Crowns off their foot, and under pretence of being Successors to Christ and his Apostles, (though Christ told the boasting Jews (who yet were unquestionably the posterity of Abraham) that they were of their fathers the Devil, because they did his works) claim notwithstanding an Infallibility of Judgement and Right of ordering all the affairs of the world in reference to Christ's Spiritual Kingdom; but yet in the mean time

very much seek nothing but the increase of their temporal Honour and Power; and to this end undermine and defeat the whole design of the Gospel, not acting according to the Laws of Christ, but making such Influences and countenancing such Practices as bring in most wealth for the support of the Magnificence of this Tyrannical High-priest, that takes it to be but his due to ride upon the necks of Princes. And therefore every gainful sin, and serviceable to this purpose, shall be made a Law, (though never so plain-blank against the Laws of God and Christ) and all those sacred purposes of Christ's coming into the World shall be trode upon for a foot-stool to lift this pack of Impostours into the Throne, that they may the better trample upon all the people of the Earth.

That is to say, Whereas Christ, by his Gospel, came to silence *Idolatry* throughout the world, these Deceivers, for their own advantage and profit, will set up openly in their Churches as gross *Image-worship* as ever was amongst the Heathen. Whereas Christ came to free the people of God from the yoke and burthen of *Mosaic* Ordinances, these Oppressors of Mankind will load their bodies and Consciences with more numerous and tedious Superstitions and Ceremonies then ever *Moses* commanded, and put them to a drudgery and slavery worse then the *Egyptian* Task-masters did the children of *Israel* in their sorest bondage.

Whereas Christ was given to the world by his Father to be an *absolute King*, from whose Decrees there can be no appeal, nor any annulment or dispensation with his Laws; a *perfect High-priest*, who by the Sacrifice of himself once made, and self-effectual Intercession, is an all-sufficient Reconciler of us to God; a *Prophet* and *Teacher*, whose Instructions and Predictions are all infallible Oracles: this *King of Babylon* (for so I will call this Tyrannical Seducer) with his Hypocritical Assistants, shall pretend that Christ has given up his Kingdom to them, and that they have the very same Power that Christ himself, can dispense with or abrogate those Laws he has made, or appoint Laws quite contrary to them, or have authority to put what sense upon them they please; which is the *utter nulling of Christ's authority* as he is *Law-giver* and *King*, and the greatest Treason and the most contemptuous that can be committed against his Heavenly Majesty. This *false High-priest* with his several Orders of *Levites*, as if that one offering of the Body of Christ, which he himself made once, were not sufficient for the atonement of the World, nor yet his sole Intercession, in virtue of his Infinite Merits and Passion, available for our reconciliation with God, pretend (to the high dishonour and vilification of Christ's own offering himself up once) to offer him up in their own hands really and bodily every day in a manner; and as if the Intercession of Christ and his own ineffimable Merits were of themselves maimed and defunctious, clap to them, to piece them out, the Merits and Intercession of mere Mortals, such as could merit for none but for themselves, nor indeed have got to Heaven but upon the sole Merits of their loving Saviour, whom they are made thus to confront in his incommunicable Office. And lastly, This *false Prophet* with the rest of his devoted Impostours, to the end that their own lies and misleadings of the people may not be discovered, but wishall to the unsufferable reproach of the great and true Prophet the

Lord *Jesus*, and the unspeakable injury of his cordial Followers, withhold those lively Oracles delivered by him and his Apostles from the knowledge of men, not without gross revilements and disparagements cast upon those Holy Writings: then which nothing can be more outrageous against the *Prophetick Office* of Christ.

5. Again, Whereas the *Divinity of Christ* is plainly and punctually and of set purpose asserted in Scripture, to assure us of the allowableness of that Religious Worship we do to him; it being his peculiar Royal or Prerogative, as being not mere Man, but God; nay his Godhead being ascertain'd to us by that argument of *Adoration* due to him, *Worship be all ye gods*: yet this perfidious Antichristian Hierarchy will not stick to undermine this Prerogative, and, as much as in them lies, to proclaim the world that he is no more then mere Man; for, as if they had found allowed instance of *Men-worship* in him, they will give Religious worship to hundreds of Saints as well as to himself. Whereas Christ is described the Prophets as the *Prince of Peace*; these falsely-pretended Successors of his, or rather the Seed of Satan, who was a man-hater and murderer from the beginning, will prove themselves Fomenters of dissentions and commotions, and causers of embroilments of Nations and Kingdoms in War upon their politick and pragmatikal Machinations for the unjust Interest of their own holy Crew. Whereas Christ was the *Light of the World*, these will study to keep the world in Ignorance, that they may the better tyrannize over them and inflave them. And whereas Christ professed himself to be the *Truth*; these will make it their business to fill the world with Falsities and Lies, so they be but so contrived as is most fit for holding up their Interest, Pomp and Power in the world.

6. And thirdly and lastly, Whereas the chief and most indispensable End of Christ's coming here upon Earth was to enliven the world with a new Life which is truly Holy and Divine; wherein are comprised those five Heavenly Graces of *Faith, Humility, Purity and Charity*; as for the false Church, This Pseudo-christian Church, by reason of the multitude of their lying Miracles and gross Legends and falsified Reliques, their incredible Stories of *Purgatory*, and shameless Impossibility of *Transsubstantiation*, (all which tend to the Profit and Interest of these Seducers) bring things to surpass, that if all the counsels of Hell were laid together, they could not invent any thing more destructive of Christian Belief, and more mischievous insinuating that Religion is onely a Fiction found out to enrich the Priests and make him powerful and honourable.

And then for *Humility*; Their Supreme Patriarch being so very haughty and wrought to that high pitch by such frauds and forgeries, by abetting and countenancing such Treasons, Murthers and Villainies, by raising Seditions and Confusions in Christendom; and this Sacerdotal Monarchy exercised with that haughtiness and unparallel'd pride, this Supreme Levite so grossly and rudely treading upon the necks of Princes, making the greatest Emperours his foot-stool in his displeasure, and his *Sedan-men* or *Chair-carriers* when he is at peace with them; and the whole constitution of their Hierarchy, in the several pomps and decorations thereof, being rather a fiery rack of inflaming Ambition to set all

spirits on the tenter-hooks in their reaching after the bewitching prizes which are ever flaring in their eyes, then an allowable frame of a modest order of Government to keep up wholesome Discipline in the Church; can we imagine any complexion of things more contrary to the Spirit of *Humility* than this?

And then again for *Purity*; For this lofty High-priest to stoop so low as to set his Seal to the allowableness of *Fornication*, by receiving an annual Tribute from the *Whores* of his Metropolis; and to enjoin coelibate to his Priests, as if he meant to drive them into the nets, that these *Nuns of Venus* may never want trading, to fill the world with Monasticks, and to set light by all kinds of debauchery, so that the Laws of the Church be observed; is the most effectual method imaginable to make Christendom a Cage of unclean birds, and so quite to wither or lop off that Branch of the *Divine Life* which we call *Purity*.

And now, lastly, for *Charity*: What can be more contrary thereto, than to interweave into Law or Religion not only what is naturally unjust, but barbarously cruel, not only killing those who are innocent, but torturing to death with the most salvage torments even those who are the most dear and faithful members of Christ; and even for that very reason, because they approve themselves to be so, and that which will make the Barbarity of these Successors of the Devil still more odious, they ensnaring men in the point of that Mystery which was the Pledge of the greatest Love of Christ that could be expressed, and was intended for the most endearing and agglutinating Cement of all those that are called by his Name, that they should upon this very score be united to one another with the sincerest love and affection that is possible? Now therefore that this sacred Pledge of Love and Amity and Unity in the Church, I mean the *Sacramental Body and Blood of Christ*, (which is a lively Commemoration of that ineffable Love of his to his Church in laying down his Life for us) should be made the main Engine and Artifice of entrapping, and afterwards of cruelly torturing and butchering, his most faithful Members; what more horrid, more execrable, and more Antichristian Abuse can there be of our Lord *Jesus*, or what Hostility against him more damnable or Diabolical?

Nay what conspiracy against Humane Nature can be more tragical or direful, or what so palpable a plot to make Mankind mere slaves and vassals, and to take away from them that Privilege by which alone they are distinguishable from brute Beasts?

7. "Suppose there were a numerous crew of oddly-habited people, inhabiting a certain vast Wood or Wilderness, that would give themselves some phantastick Title, to make the better show of Sanctity, as, suppose, *The Knights of the Holy Grotte*, or *The Priests of the Infallible Spirit*, or the like; and should take up a resolution amongst themselves to be accounted *Unerring* in whatsoever they unanimously averred for true; and should agree together and determine (for the gainful vending of so marvellous a commodity) that there is so great virtue in such a form of certain Magical words, which they know how to use, that if one of their Sacred Order speak them over any of these pure, white, round
"Pebbles

" *Pebbles* which easily are found in Rills and Brooks, straightaway the
 " *little Stone*, though it retain still the same colour, magnitude, figure and
 " hardness that it had before, yet (so wonderful is the mystery) is most
 " surely turned into an *Eagle*, whence this kind of stone also is called the
 " *Eagle-stone*.

" Upon which supposition, let us further imagine that these *Infallible*
 " *Knights*, meeting (as it is usual) Travellers upon the way, and declaring
 " this wonder-working power of their Order, and shewing them one of
 " these stones, and having said the charm over it, protesting that it is ready
 " to become an *Eagle*, (though it be not visibly changed at all from what it
 " was before) may sometimes light upon some honest plain-hearted passenger
 " senger that may flatly deny the Exploit, and contend that the enchanted
 " Stone is no *Eagle*, but a *Stone* still. Whereupon we will suppose that
 " these *Knights of the Holy Grove* blowing their Bugles will cause whole
 " Swarms of that Sacred Order to come out of the Wood, who shall
 " avouch upon the Honour of their Infallible *Knighthood* that the Miracle
 " is really performed, and that which this incredulous Stranger contends
 " to be still a *Stone*, is in very truth that Royal Bird of *Jupiter*. But
 " such should be the honest stoutness and plain-heartedness of the en-
 " countered Stranger, that notwithstanding all this he should persist in his
 " former opinion, alledging that he cannot believe that to be an *Eagle*,
 " wherein he can discern neither bill nor talons, head nor foot, wing
 " tail, bone nor flesh, but is in every thing as much *Stone* as before;
 " that therefore they shall never persuade him of this Magical Transmu-
 " tion, there being no proof thereof but their own Testimony, and that
 " point-blank against the manifest evidence of Sense and Reason. Where-
 " upon if these *Knights of the Grove*, putting on a grim Vizard of
 " enraged Zeal in behalf of their own Traffick and Reputation, should fall
 " on this innocent man, and slay him, seizing upon what he has, his Mo-
 " cloaths and Gelding, as lawful Booty; would not these *Knights*,
 " *Priests of the Infallible Spirit* be accounted in the judgment of all
 " the world a pack of bloody Impostours, a crew of High-way-men, con-
 " spiring to rob and spoil honest Passengers that goe that way?

8. What then shall we think of those numerous Swarms of this pretended
Infallible Church we have described, that will be ready to quarrel
 with any Christian passenger in his pilgrimage through the Wilderness of
 this World, if he deny the *Transsubstantiation of a round white Wafer* into
 a perfect Man, when a Priest has said certain words over it, though
 the *Wafer*, upon the most exquisite examination of our Senses, be
 changed one jot from what it was before? Yet upon the boast of the
fallibility of this Church, a man must believe it against all Sense, Scrip-
 ture and Reason, or else die the most cruel kind of death that Malefactors
 ever put to. Who cannot but look upon such a pack of men as these
 not onely *Antichristian*, but *Anti-humane*, *tanquam juratos humani ge-
 nis hostes*, an accursed company of bloody Thieves and Robbers,
 sworn conspirators against the sons of *Adam*, who with might and
 endeavour to maul them and martyr them, to subdue them and enslave
 them both Body and Soul, and more cruelly to tyrannize over them,
 it is fit for any man to doe over brute Beasts:

Can any thing be imagined more *Antichristian* than this, or more contrary to that noble and Divine Spirit of *Charity* and sweet *Benignity* that was so conspicuous in the Lord *Jesus Christ*, who is so frequently in Scripture styled *the Son of man*, as to whom appertains that expected Kingdom of Peace, of holy Love and of Humanity?

9. Wherefore from this short draught I think one may discern that I have given a *very true and faithful Idea of that which is real and essential Antichristianism*, and truly I think to the highest pitch imaginable. For to excuse the matter in saying, that this Pseudo-Christian Church does not openly deny Christ or his Gospel, does not persecute every one that bears the name of a Christian, and, lastly, does not set up Images to the Deities of the Pagans, *Mars*, *Venus*, and the rest: to these I briefly answer.

To the first, That it were not their Interest to deny the whole Truth of the Gospel; for then their Power and Credit would fail in the world: But it were the Interest of the Church of God they did so; and therefore they are the worst enemies that can be, doing more mischief under the colour of friendship than any declared enemy can. Besides that there are pregnant proofs in the Scripture, that *Antichrist* is to be a Christian in external Profession, not a *Pagan* or any other Alien from the Church.

To the second, That their not killing all that are called Christians, shews that their Malice and Cruelty is more exquisitely opposed and directed against Christ, in that their spight is onely against his true and sincere Members. For those that are spared are not truly Christ's Servants, but this High-priest's vassals, or at least are taken to be so by him, else they could not escape his fury, so that his opposition to Christ is onely more judicious and adequate, not less fierce nor malicious.

And to the last, that they worship the Images or Persons, not of *Venus*, or *Neptune*, or *Mars*, but of the *Blessed Virgin*, *S. Peter*, *S. Paul*, &c. Suppose a mighty Potentate, and as vertuous as mighty, should put out severe Edicts against Adultery and carnal Fornication; and that some guilty of the fact should apologize for themselves to their Prince on this wise, It is true indeed, Great Sir, that we have committed Fornication, but beseech you to take notice of the excusableness or justifiableness of the circumstances. For we are not such gross and coarse-grain'd Fornicators as defile themselves with any Flesh, but onely such as we have (and that upon high desert) a very great respect for and entire love to, and that rather for their near Relation to your Highness, namely, your Daughters, Sisters and Nieces, and others that are more near then ordinary. Would not such an Apologie as this enrage the Prince with the greater wrath against their wicked Leudness?

How odious then and ridiculous would such a Plea be touching this *Spiritual Fornication* with the nearest Relations and Friends of our Blessed Saviour? Can *Spiritual Adultery*, which is *Idolatry*, committed upon the *Blessed Virgin*, upon *S. John* and others, be more tolerable than upon *Diana*, *Apollo*, and other Mortals canonized by the Heathen?

May indeed would not this latter be but onely *simple Fornication*, or *Adultery*, (there being no averfation in such unqualified persons from the

the receiving of Divine honours) but the former an execrable Rape, the committing Idolatry or Spiritual Fornication against the wills of the Holy Saints they thus blaspheme and abuse :

So that I see not the least reason left to doubt but that I have decyphered the Idea of the most perfect and most detestable Antichristianism which can be.

10. And thus having fully perfected the Draught of the Idea of Antichristianism, I might, according to the method I intimated, make Application thereof to the state of the Church apostatized thereinto.

But because some men are so very hardly brought off to believe that degeneracy of the Christian Church, so long as they do still formally profess *Jesus* to be the Christ, can amount to the production of that false and signal Antichrist the Prophecies seem to point at, whom they with all peremptoriness contend to be an open Denier of *Jesus*, and as expounding an Affertor of himself to be the expected *Messias*, no pretended Successor nor Disciple of the true Christ; I think it very convenient, before I proceed to the Application of my Idea of Antichristianism, to make a more exquisite search into the Prophecies, and thence to demonstrate (I hope) with unexceptionable evidence, That such an Antichrist forsooth, as is represented in that Idea, is also prefigured or fore-told by the Holy Prophets, that is to say, such an one as, doing such abominable things as I have instanced in, yet professes himself to be Part, nay Chief of the Body of Christ, which is his Church.

For unless I doe this, I know that such is the shuffling disposition of Ignorance and Falshood, that they will think they can evade all by saying That I have indeed made an operose Description of A true Idea, but not of The true Idea of Antichristianism, such as my Title pretends to : which is to say, That the Church does indeed very naughtily, and in some Antichristianly, in these miscarriages, but it will not amount to the making up the Antichrist properly and signally so called, and pointed unto by the Predictions of the Prophets.

Which therefore we are necessitated to search into before we go further; and are the more easily induced so to doe, the Method being differently natural either way. For the first intended Method was, this Description of the Idea of Antichristianism, to make punctual Application thereof to the Apostatized condition of the Church; to discover who is *de facto* that grand Antichrist; and then to apply the Prophecies to the Events, to shew that they also do indigitate the same which my Idea does discover. My present purposed Method is, After this Description of the Idea of Antichristianism, to make search into the Prophecies; to find out that their prefigurations of Antichrist are in the strokes (for neither are the Prophecies concerning Christ predictive of all his particular actions) most manifestly answerable to the Idea we have given, and that the Antichristianism which they foretell of is a Degeneracy or Apostasy of the Church still formally professing Christianity, and accordingly as we have described things in our Idea: and then, in the next place, to make a more punctual Application of our Idea of Antichristianism thus justified by the agreeableness it hath with the Prophetick

dictions, unto the Apostatized state of the Church for so many Ages to our own times. Which will be a more plenary eviſion of the ſtupendious veracity of the Prophecies. And it is as good and natural a method to prove the Truth of the Prophecies by the Fulneſs of the Events, as to illuſtrate the Nature of the Events by the Application of the Prophecies.

But in the mean time there will be a neceſſity in this preſent ſearch to have recourſe unto Events, in ſome ſort or other; for who can explain a Prophecie without any recourſe to Events? But all the Hiſtory we need to have recourſe to being either ſuch as is diſtinct from any part of this Idea we have delineated, (and therefore to be brought into view in the interpreting of ſuch paſſages as require it) or elſe being but a general knowledge of thoſe Limbs of Antichriſtianism I have deſcribed, of which ſcarce any are ignorant or unpersuaded of for the main; we may without the leaſt confuſion or obſcurity (partly by referring to this Idea in things that want no proof, and partly by producing Hiſtory where occaſion requires) apply our ſelves to our intended ſearch into the Prophecies for a more full demonſtration of the truth of our Idea of Antichriſtianism. Which having finiſhed, we ſhall make a more punctual Application thereof, for the more undeniably convincing the guilty, and for the clearing the innocent from all ſuch unjuſt Aſperſions.

The End of the Firſt Part.

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